

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

*2nd Edition -  
2002*

Some recently unearthed from the  
Shadow Rift,  
some stolen in the Vallaki Kargatane  
secret vault ...

A Ravenloft Netbook

The Undead Sea Scrolls

# The Undead Sea Scrolls 2002

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for submissions, questions or comments!**

**Released to the world on : December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2002**

*Important copyright text on page vi !*

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## A word or two about the origins of this netbook

This Undead Sea Scrolls (USS) 2002 netbook is the second edition of a spin-off of the Book of S\_ series compiled by the Kargatane, housed at the official Ravenloft website at: [www.kargatane.com](http://www.kargatane.com).

However, as many know, this year's edition, the Book of Storms, has been cancelled by the Kargatane. In the wake of this postponement for this year, the Undead Sea Scrolls netbook hopes took up the slack to give all Ravenloft fans a place to submit their NPCs, domains, items, fan-fic, and anything else Ravenloft related!

So, while the original purpose of the USS was to be a refuge for lost articles, this year's edition of the USS is different: the USS have been divided in two sections. The first section, [Scientiae Arcanum](#), takes the relay of the BoS\_ series and offer academic articles that could have been in the Book of Storms. However, note that the tastes of the Fraternity of Shadows are probably very different from those of the Kargatane. We will let you judge on that. For instance, you will note that some articles with uncanonical aspects found their way in that first section. We found those to be very well made and we think they could represent a serious option for a DM in his campaign.

The second section, [Mystica Nephos](#), is also about interesting articles, but less formal, less near-close-to-canonical, and so forth (or those texts that could have been in the USS 2001).

Again, we offer a toast to Ravenloft, a toast to the Kargatane, to thank them of their trust and support, and sincerely hope you will not toast the editors of this netbook !

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*Advertising !*

**For those poor unfortunates who found this netbook while surfing on the net, and do not usually visit the kargatane web site...**

First, if you play the Ravenloft setting, you have to visit the Kargatane (www.kargatane.com), the official Ravenloft 3<sup>rd</sup> edition web site, filled with nasty ideas to throw at your players ! Even Azalin Rex is a regular !!!

We recommend these netbooks and its fellows extremely highly to anyone interested in Ravenloft . Their "BoS\_" netbook collection is really excellent, but searching for dark knowledge in all dusty corners of the site is also well worth the time spend. Some ideas are Ravenloft-specific but many ideas (NPCs, etc.) can be borrowed for other D&D settings.

Also, if you don't visit the Kargatane (a deadly curse on you and your children until the 6<sup>th</sup> generation), you missed the Undead Sea Scrolls (USS) propaganda on that site. So perhaps you did not know **you** can send stuff for the USS netbook too ???

If you have written something about Ravenloft (domain, NPC or secret society, adventure, rules, story, poem, drawing, whatever !), why not publish it in next year's USS ?

One rule: it has to be cool, new, and about Ravenloft !!! (simple enough ?)

The next release of the yearly USS, version 2003, is planned for around December 1st, 2003, and the submission deadline is October 10th, 2003.

Don't hesitate to contact us for any submissions / questions / suggestions / comments / bottle of wine / chocolate boxes / gifts / rant / poison candy :) at : UndeadSeaScrolls@hotmail.com

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## Eternal gratitude (eternal ? Nothing really is ?)

We warmly thank the Kargatane for their trust and support of the USS since the start of this project, and for allowing us to publicize the USS activities on their site.

Jean-Guy M., for major major help again on fine tuning the document presentation and for converting the Word document to a PDF document.



## USS stats and quality control ...

For this year, the Undead Sea Scrolls editors had the pleasure to review **80** articles, submitted by about **30** different authors ! It is much more then last year's and of course we owe this increase to the Kargatane cancellation of their Book of Storms project. We are happy we were given the chance to make the USS 2002 as "the closest thing to the Book of Storms" !

Of these **80** articles, about **60** were accepted in the netbook. Yes, **60** articles ! The USS 2002 is close to **480** pages (the USS 2001 was only 240 pages !) Our average article is about **7** pages !

Of course, the five USS editors did put their Ravenloft Dming experience in the process: nearly **15** of the **60** articles included in the netbook were asked for revisions. Of course, it thrills us to be able to give our suggestions on how to improve a great idea, and to see the authors sending us back their revised work.

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

The Undead Sea Scrolls has now reached full cruising speed and is the only Ravenloft netbook of that type. Be sure we will be there next year with a **high quality**, **huge** netbook !

**Ravenloft fans**, start working on your articles for the **USS 2003** edition !

Oh, by the way, this netbook (in Word version) is best viewed with the Grantshand, Blackcastle MF, BethanysHand, Morpheus, Grunge and the Nosferatu fonts installed in your computer ...

To see this netbook on its best look, download these fonts at most places where you got this netbook, or e-mail us to get a copy of the "USS fonts" file at UndeadSeaScrolls@hotmail.com

For all cases: download the zipped "fonts" file. Then copy the content of the zipped file in your "c:/windows/fonts" directory. Then open Word (you might need to retstart your computer).

**Enjoy !**

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# Running the Place

Scientiae Arcanum

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# FALLEN CHILDREN OF NATURE

### WHEN LOVE BECOMES HATRED, EVERYTHING IS LOST

By: Luiz Eduardo Neves  
Peret  
(Lord Arijani)

A prestige class for a  
former guardian of nature  
who now seeks to destroy  
it

*It was impossible to know for how long the man had been running through that dark forest. The twisted tree branches cloaked the night sky, and the moon was nowhere to be seen. Distant howls announced the presence of wolves, or so it seemed. The man knew a great deal of local legends and childhood bogeyman tales to know better. He ran faster.*

*After having seen his caravan assaulted on the road, the man remembered little of happened next. Shouts, screams of fear, the woman saying how sorry she was that the caravan leader did not accept help from the gypsy guide, the sounds of battle, steel, fire, pain, and then the silence. He seemed to remember something about the family who joined the caravan at the last stop, they reclusive manners and the way they stared at everyone else, as if looking for something.*

*As he stopped to breathe, he suddenly remembered that, when the raiders came out of the forest, that family did not move a muscle, no one there screamed or had any reaction, not even the children. It looked like they had been expecting the attack. But then the memory of that awful sound after the battle cloaked his mind once again.*

*He felt like he was going to throw up if he remembered everything, so he tried to dismiss the thought, paying attention to the woods around him. The fog was heavy. No lights, no sign of civilization whatsoever. Once again he heard the howls, and it seemed that someone was singing among the wolves this time. He did not want to stay and see the face of the singer, though, so he ran once again. His face and arms had bruises, his clothes were torn and dirty.*

*Then he felt the smell of burned wood, and decided to follow the scent. He came to a wide clearance in the woods, a place that seemed to have been recently burned. However, there was no sign of a camp nearby, nor any signs of lumberjack's or farmer's activity. He was still considering what might have happened when a woman stepped out of the woods from the other side of the clear ground. He instinctively reached for his knife and watched. The woman seemed normal enough, wearing an old brown robe with a hood. It looked like she was some kind of priestess or hermit, and she seemed more concerned about the burned woods than with his presence.*

*He decided to approach and greeted her. She barely gave him a second glance, and simply asked:*

*"What are you doing in this part of the woods?"*

*"Please, help me! My caravan was attacked, I was the sole survivor! I am trying to reach a town or farm, can you guide me through these woods?"*

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*"I know these woods very well", she answered, finally looking at him in the eye. "Have you seen who did this?"*

*"No", he answered, "I just arrived. But I heard the howls of wolves and a soft singing a few minutes before I came here."*

*"I see", she gave him a strange look. "So you heard the singing, too." He was confused for a moment, but before he could say anything she turned away and said "Come, I will take you to my home. It is not safe here."*

*She walked away fast. He was tired but tried his best to keep the pace. It seemed, however, that she knew the woods a lot better than any one he had ever met, for she crossed thorny bushes and entangled vines without so much as a thought, while he had a hard time trying to follow. When he complained, she simply said, "It's the fastest route."*

*After a short while, they reached another cleared space, also burned. He wondered once again who was doing that to the forest. She turned to him and said "Wait here, I will announce your arrival."*

*"What? Announce to whom?" But she quickly disappeared among branches. He looked up as the moon seemed to be struggling to show up among dark clouds. The moonlight finally gave him some measure of visibility. He turned to see the path they had come through and was shocked. Right before his eyes, the bushes and thorns on the way they had crossed were turning brown and drying up fast, opening a pathway through the forest. In a few moments, dried leaves and burnt branches were all that was left from the dense foliage where he had walked just a few minutes before.*

*He felt a chilling coldness cross his spine and turned back to look for his guide. The he saw the tree moving its branches towards him. That horrible plant opened a vicious maw and what looked like a pair of eyes. He screamed and tried to run, but a pack of wolves suddenly appeared out of nowhere, blocking his way, their teeth shining under the moonlight. He*

*avoided the first branch that tried to grab him, and screamed again for help. Then he heard the song once again.*

*The woman appeared once again, this time wearing a white cotton gown covered by blood stains, and carrying a sickle in her right hand. "You heard the song", she said "and therefore you may not leave. I don't want anyone picking on my part of the forest. Not while I'm not ready, at least."*

*"Wait! I-I won't tell anyone! I can keep your secret! I swear! Please let me go home!"*

*"Home?" She gave him a mocking smile. "This is home. And besides, I need a sacrifice to renew my vows."*

*"What vows? What are you talking about? Are you one of those priests of nature? How come you would sacrifice another human being to a tree?"*

*"You mean this?" She pointed to the tree, who seemed to recoil for a brief moment, as if it feared the woman more than he feared it. "This is nothing, just another servant, like them. If I let things be the way nature has them, any of these animals, or this plant, would attack me at the first chance. But I keep them in check, you see, I have bent their will to mine. And as they help me, sometimes I bring them a gift. Your flesh will feed them well for this night. And your blood will feed the Land. That will be my sacrifice." With that, she briefly motioned to her servants. He screamed one last time as the branches and fangs came closer.*

## Fallen Children of Nature

The Fallen Children were once responsible for the environment, caretakers and protectors of wildlife, who for some reason wandered away from the right path. Some lost their hope when faced the unnatural evils that roam the Land of Mists, others simply let themselves be corrupted by the Land. Their

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abilities and magic have become perverted and are used to destroy everything they once cared for. Some Fallen Children develop rituals and sacrifices to feed the Land with blood, in the hopes that their powers will be enhanced. Others do nothing like this, simply avoiding any contact with Nature. Whatever the case, these former guardians of life become specialized in the ways of death.

**Hit die:** d8.

## Requirements

To qualify as a Fallen Child of Nature, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: any evil.

Concentration: 5 ranks.

Handle Animal: 5 ranks.

Knowledge (nature): 8 ranks.

Wilderness Lore: 8 ranks.

## Class Skills

The Fallen Child of Nature's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Animal Empathy (Cha) (\*), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha) (\*), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Intuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Knowledge (nature), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Scry (Int), Search (Int), Spellcraft (Int), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Use Rope (Dex) and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

Skills marked with an asterisk (\*) may suffer penalties (see below).

*Skill Points at each Level:* 4 + Int modifier.

Class Level	BAB	F	R	W	Special	Spells per Day									
						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
1 <sup>st</sup>	+0	+2	+0	+2	Unnatural aura +2, altered magic	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2 <sup>nd</sup>	+1	+3	+0	+3	Nature sense, Trackless Step	1	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	
3 <sup>rd</sup>	+2	+3	+1	+3	Woodland Stride	2	1	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	
4 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+4	+1	+4	Unnatural aura +4	2	2	1	0	0	-	-	-	-	
5 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+4	+1	+4	Black Thumb	3	2	2	1	0	0	-	-	-	
6 <sup>th</sup>	+4	+5	+2	+5	Dread Plantwalk 1/day	3	3	2	2	1	0	0	-	-	
7 <sup>th</sup>	+5	+5	+2	+5	Unnatural aura +6	3	3	3	2	2	1	0	0	-	
8 <sup>th</sup>	+6	+6	+2	+6	Awaken dread treant	4	3	3	3	2	2	1	0	0	
9 <sup>th</sup>	+6	+6	+3	+6	Dread Plantwalk 3/day	4	4	3	3	3	2	2	1	0	
10 <sup>th</sup>	+7	+7	+3	+7	Unnatural aura +8, create undead treant	4	4	4	3	3	3	2	2	1	

## Class Features

### Weapon and Armor Proficiencies:

Fallen Children of Nature are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, all types of armor and shields. Former Druids are no longer prohibited from wearing metal armor or using weapons out of their list. Note that armor check penalties for armor heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Pick Pockets and Tumble. Also, Swim checks suffer a -1 penalty for every 5 pounds of armor and equipment carried.

**Unnatural Aura (Su):** The Fallen Child of Nature is marked as an enemy of nature from 1<sup>st</sup> level. Any Charisma-based skill checks made when dealing with animals (both wild and domesticated) has the DC increased by the number on the table. Intimidate skill checks with animals, on the other hand, receive a bonus equal to the number listed, and the DC is not increased. This unnatural aura manifests continually, even if the Fallen Child shapechanges to animal form (if he had this ability). Whenever the Fallen Child's powers described below have a save DC related to his

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Charisma modifier, the aura modifier is not applied.

**Altered Magic (Su):** The new, twisted point of view of the Fallen Child of Nature regarding nature prevents him from making use of certain spells and powers. A former druid or ranger can no longer cast spells related to plant strengthening and growth, nor attract animal companions. A former cleric cannot cast spells of the Plant Domain. The Fallen Child who was a druid still has the ability to shapechange to animal form, summon creatures and cast charm-related spells if he had such ability prior to entering the prestige class, but he must keep in mind that animals affected by his spells might turn on him as soon as they are free-willed again. An Animal Empathy check is required at the end of each spell to prevent this. The DC is 10 + Fallen Child's class level, representing the fact that, as he grows in power, natural creatures avoid him more and more.

**Spells:** The Fallen Child has the ability to cast a number of divine spells from the domains of Death, Destruction and Fire. He prepares and casts spells as a cleric. Wisdom is the key ability for his spells, and whenever a Fallen Child gets 0 spells of a certain level, he gets only bonus spells.

**Nature Sense (Ex):** This ability functions exactly as the Druid's ability of the same name. The Fallen Child receives it as a boon related to his newfound hatred for animals and plants.

**Trackless Step:** At 2<sup>nd</sup> level, the Fallen Child receives the ability to leave no trail in natural surroundings.

**Woodland Stride:** At 3<sup>rd</sup> level, the Fallen Child may move through natural thorns, briars, overgrown areas, and similar terrain at his normal speed and without suffering damage or other impairment. This ability functions exactly like the Druid's ability of the same name.

**Black Thumb (Su):** At 5<sup>th</sup> level, the unnatural corruption of the Fallen Child is so great that his mere touch can kill plants. Any plant touched by the Fallen Child's bare skin must make a Fortitude save (DC 13 + Fallen Child's Charisma modifier) or suffer 1d4 points of damage per minute until it dies. This also applies to any plants he touches with his bare skin while using his Woodland Stride ability. The plant can be cured with *Remove Disease* or *Remove Curse*. When the Fallen Child creates an undead treant (see below), that treant is subject to his Black Thumb ability even though it is not a Plant but Undead. The Fallen Child cannot affect any other undead treant with this ability.

**Dread Plantwalk (Su):** At 6<sup>th</sup> level, the Fallen Child of Nature can *Tree Stride* once per day as if casting the spell of the same name. Both trees are considered to have been touched and are subject to the Fallen Child's Black Thumb ability. At 9<sup>th</sup> level, the Fallen Child may use this ability three times per day.

**Awaken Dread Treant (Su):** At 8<sup>th</sup> level, the Fallen Child can cast a modified version of the *Awaken* spell once per month, to turn a natural tree into a dread treant. The tree becomes sentient and must immediately make a Will save (DC 15 + Fallen Child's Charisma modifier) or become evil. The tree must make a new Will save each month, with a cumulative +1 per month. The treant is not under the Fallen Child's command, but is usually not unfriendly, as it knows all too well that the Guardian might easily kill it with a touch or fire magic. The use of this supernatural, life-affecting ability requires a Power Check.

**Create Undead Treant (Su):** At 10<sup>th</sup> level, the Fallen Child of Nature can use his *Awaken* ability to turn a particularly strong tree into an undead treant. He may also use his ability to turn a dread treant into an undead one. The tree must make a Fortitude save (DC 17 + Fallen Child's Charisma modifier) or suffer the effects of the Black Thumb ability, reanimating upon death as an undead treant. The newly formed creature is not under the Fallen Child's command, but is usually not unfriendly, as it

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knows all too well that the Guardian might easily destroy it with a touch or fire magic. Exceptionally, the Fallen Child can use her Black Thumb ability to harm and destroy that specific undead treant, even though the Black Thumb ability does not usually work on

undead. The use of the Create Undead Treant ability requires a Power Check.



# SCHOLARS OF DARKNESS

## THE FRATERNITY OF SHADOWS

By: Nathan Okerlund  
(Dmitri Stanislaus)

One of Ravenloft's oldest  
and most secretive  
institutions, the  
Fraternity of Shadows  
hope to use the power of  
the mind to bend the  
whole of the demiplane to  
their own will. To them,  
heroes are no more than  
pawns in an elaborate  
game...

First, know that the  
World is but Shadow; and  
the study of Mind-science  
is the study of Shadow.  
Through the power of the  
Mind we manipulate  
Shadow, and bend it to  
our will. This is the  
first principle of our  
Fraternity.

**Count Wilhelm von Lovenhorst, The Oathes and  
Compacts of the Fraternity of Shadows**

They display all of the  
grim and intense  
concentration on Self  
which is the mark of  
Hell.

**C.S. Lewis, preface to The Screwtape Letters**

The Fraternity of Shadows began as a  
tiny group of mystics, philosophers and scholars  
of the University of Il Aluk; it has since become  
one of the principal secret societies of the  
Demiplane of Dread. By their mental training  
and mastery of the arts of magic they hope to  
create a new world in their own image; in fact,  
although they themselves would not put it in  
such a way, their goal is nothing less than  
overthrowing the Dark Powers and becoming  
the new masters of Ravenloft. What the Dark  
Powers think of their enterprise is anyone's  
guess, but the Fraternity has proven remarkably  
successful in gathering information on the nature  
of the Demiplane and its inhabitants. In fact, it  
seems likely that only Strahd von Zarovich and  
Azalin Rex have achieved a deeper  
understanding of the fundamental nature of  
Ravenloft than that held by the Fathers of the  
Fraternity of Shadows.

The members of the Fraternity of  
Shadows are motivated by the principle that they  
can create reality by mental effort, and that only  
the mental is truly real; hence, most of them  
focus on illusion, the most mentally oriented of  
the arts of magic. They believe that only an  
awakened mind--a mind freed from the  
"illusions" of physical reality--can create a real  
world, and they believe that only the members of  
the Fraternity have "awakened" minds. Hence,  
all persons who are not members of the  
Fraternity are semi-intelligent animals, which  
can be manipulated, altered, or disposed of at  
will. The members of the Fraternity refer to the  
physical world as "Shadow" and take their name



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from the fact that they are, as they see it, bound in physical form and seeking release from Shadow into Enlightenment--the purely mental state which they believe the Fathers and Exalted Brothers of their fraternity have achieved.

*...here, at least, there could be no doubt; the map the old peasant had produced showed nothing more than Mordent, Barovia, Forlorn and Darkon; absent, absent entirely, were Invidia, Gundarak, even Kartakass, where I had spent the previous winter. Mind awlirl, I gave him a handful of coins--I have no recollection of the amount, nor of anything else that transpired all that afternoon. I walked about as in a dream, unconscious of where my feet wandered; for if, as it seemed, the very earth beneath my feet could swim into existence from the mists, what could be real? Every passerby seemed but a shadow, a thing of imagination, a creature of paper that would blow away at my first breath. I doubted my senses, I doubted my sanity, almost I doubted my very existence; and still the map reproached me silently.*

*Returning at last to my study at the University, I threw myself into my chair and gave myself up to the consideration of the strange new world the map had shown to me. At last, lulled by the evening breezes, I slept, or seemed to sleep; and as I did I dreamed, if I may term a dream a sensation so exquisite, so clear--much clearer than any ordinary perception. In this dream--this vision--I perceived that I, myself, was creator, or co-creator, of a world; and from my very mind there seemed to step whole nations whose history passed by between breath and breath, so that I grew dizzy at the thought of such fecundity of imagery sprung from me. And suddenly I knew that, knowing, I exist; cogito ergo sum--and, what is more, knowing, I create; cogito ergo creo.*

*And with this thought, all became clear to me. I knew that the world about me was no more than a shadow--the mental image of some deity or demon; and I resolved that I would equal that demon in resource, in creativity, and in tenacity, and wrest control of this world from he or they who have created it...*

**Lazarus Ikonnas, founder of the Fraternity of Shadows**

## History of the Fraternity

The Fraternity was founded by Lazarus Ikonnas and four others in the year 617 by the Barovian calendar in Il Aluk; it grew slowly over the next thirty years, having only sixteen members by 650. Soon after that time, however, it began to spread more rapidly among the intellectuals and magicians of Darkon and Mordent, who were drawn to its arcane, solipsistic philosophy and its growing power among the elite of the Core. As Borca and Richemulot appeared and Lamordia joined the Core the Fraternity spread itself throughout the educated classes of those domains, as well. At last, however, the Fraternity made a crucial misstep; in an attempt to overthrow Azalin Rex, whom the Fraternity considered to be their greatest single obstacle to domination of the Demiplane, certain members of the Fraternity of Shadows backed Falkovnia in the first Dead Man's Campaign, causing that military misadventure to be far more successful than it might otherwise have been. When the crisis had passed, Azalin took a heavy revenge; he conducted a massive purge of the University of Il Aluk and the intellectuals of the city and succeeded in capturing and killing more than half of the Fraternity, including Lazarus Ikonnas. Many, however, were forewarned and succeeded in fleeing Darkon, and the Fraternity had spread far beyond its roots; in other domains the Fraternity and the Kargat found themselves on more equal footing, and Azalin was forced to discontinue his efforts to destroy the Fraternity both root and branch due to heavy losses among his foreign secret agents. The Kargat and Fraternity of Shadows have maintained an uneasy truce since that time; in many places they still vie, directly or indirectly, for information and contacts. During the recent absence of Azalin Rex the two secret societies achieved something like a peace--so much so that the Fraternity has recently conducted a general meeting in Martira Bay--but the Fraternity is still



# The Undead Sea Scrolls

weaker in Darkon than in any other part of the Core.

After the appearance of Dementlieu the Fraternity naturally gravitated toward this educated and sophisticated domain; however, with few exceptions (most notably Lord Balfour de Casteelle, president of the University of Dementlieu and Father of the Fraternity) they maintain a low profile, to avoid the attention of Dominic d'Honaire. The Fraternity plays a large role in the intellectual communities of Richemulot and Borca, in particular, and also maintains a strong presence among the relatively few scholars of Nova Vaasa and Falkovnia, in particular among the members of the Radiant Tower. Other Core domains have relatively few Fraternity members native to them. Outside the Core, Nosus and Paridon are the only two domains in which the Fraternity has a significant presence, although they are beginning to make inroads in the University of Tvashtri in Sri Raji.

## Organization of the Fraternity

The Fraternity is hierarchal, with initiates progressing through six ranks from Brother Initiate to Father of the order. (Progression is further explained under the Fraternity of Shadows prestige class given below.) The hierarchy is not military, but rather one of prestige, influence, and, most important of all, knowledge; at each new level the brother is entrusted with a deeper understanding of the Fraternity and its history and goals and with access to new sources of information. By tradition dating back to the founding of the Fraternity, there are five Fathers of the Fraternity (known collectively as the Umbra, which is also their most formal individual title); the other ranks have no fixed number. Currently there are somewhere between one hundred and one hundred fifty members of the Fraternity, most of whom are Brothers and Honored Brothers.

Despite their strict hierarchy the members of the Fraternity are generally only

loosely affiliated with each other; there is certainly no “chain of command”, and many brothers may go years without seeing any of their fellows. The Fraternity does, however, hold an extraordinary meeting every three years on April 31, at which all the members who can attend come to a single place and discuss their newly obtained knowledge and the progress that the Fraternity has made in dominating Shadow. Past meetings have been held at the Great Library of Port-a-Lucine and at the Radiant Tower of Lekar, and in other major cities and centers of learning throughout the Core. (Lord Balfour de Casteelle, has forbidden the meeting of more than three Brothers of the Fraternity at that campus. He has learned that Dominic d'Honaire has taken an unusual interest in the University in recent years and hopes to avoid giving him any reason to make a more thorough investigation of de Casteelle's activities in support of the Fraternity.)

Due to their concentration in urban (and urbane) areas and their need for access to academic and arcane sources of information, the Fraternity of Shadows often find it inconvenient to pretend that they don't know each other or have no connection to each other; hence, they have hidden in plain sight as an academic brotherhood with branches throughout the universities and places of learning of the Core. They use their academic status to recruit those students, faculty and thinkers whom they believe may be like-minded to their cause. The Fraternity is considered one of the more prestigious groups among the academics of the Core, although not unusually so; most non-academics in high society think of them as rather dull and stodgy, but some of the more intellectual salons and philosophical groups consider it a point of pride that members of the Fraternity of Shadows participate in their soirees and dinners. By building their influence in high society the Fraternity hope to be able to increase their influence and recruit more of the rising generation of young gentlemen and noblemen to their cause. The Fraternity of Shadows is well known as an academic brotherhood, but few outside the Fraternity, if any, have any inkling of their non-academic aims and ideas.

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## Membership in the Fraternity of Shadows

Membership in the Fraternity of Shadows is extended by invitation only, and only to persons who have examined thoroughly over a period of at least a year. People who display compassion, show deep religious feeling, or who have close personal attachments, such as a wife and children, are usually considered unsuitable; the ideal candidate is intelligent, imaginative, callous, unscrupulous, and without other loyalties. The Fraternity accepts both wizards and sorcerers into the order. Originally, all the members of the Fraternity were wizards, and sorcerers were simply unheard of; thus, the Fraternity developed as an academic, wizardly organization. However, the appearance of sorcerers, who use the force of their own will to mold reality, has been taken as evidence that the founders of the Fraternity were correct: certain people are gifted with the ability to create reality, and only these people are truly alive; therefore they are the natural rulers of the mindless drones surrounding them. Because of the differences inherent to wizardly and sorcerous magic, there is some rivalry between the two kinds of spellcaster; the wizards believe that an instructed, trained mastery of magic and reality is more rigorous and creative, while the sorcerers believe that their untrained, natural spellcasting is indicative of their own superior ability to create reality. The rivalry is purely philosophical, however, and does not materially interfere with the workings of the Fraternity.

The Fraternity does not allow woman members, due, again, to tradition rather than for any practical reason. The Countess Karla von Lovenhorst, daughter of Count Wilhelm von Lovenhorst, is a notable exception who obtained her place due to her father's influence and her own extensive knowledge of illusion and of the Demiplane; other women might be admitted under similarly unusual extenuating circumstances. The philosophical and moral outlook promoted by the brothers of the

Fraternity means that all or nearly all will be neutral evil in alignment.

*The powers and principles of Mind-science are given to the Brother of the Fraternity as a priceless boon and as the first secret of his very soul. Let him reveal them to no person not initiated in the Fraternity at peril of his own Mind & Will.*

### Count Wilhelm von Lovenhorst, The Oaths and Compacts of the Fraternity of Shadows

The Oaths and Compacts of the Fraternity of Shadows: The initiate into the Fraternity of Shadows swears oaths of fealty to his fellow-brothers and to the Fathers of the Fraternity; first and most importantly, he swears never to reveal the nature of the Fraternity nor its aims to anyone not initiated. He also swears never to conceal knowledge from the Brotherhood, never to act against the interest of a fellow-brother of the Fraternity, and never to study the arts of necromancy. Only the first oath is strictly enforced by the Fraternity at large, but it is enforced very vigorously indeed; a Brother who breaks that oath can probably count his future life in days. The other three are not strictly policed, but if a brother breaks them egregiously or consistently he will pay the consequence. The only penalty ever applied by the Fraternity is death.

## The Umbrucha

The Umbrucha are the assassins of the Fraternity, used when a brother is condemned to death by the Fathers of the Fraternity. They are similar in appearance to the shadows of human beings, but they are of a peculiar ink-black shade far darker than ordinary shadows.

### Umbrucha

**CR 8 Medium undead (incorporeal)** HD 6d12 (39 hp); Initiative +9 Spd Fly 30 ft, (perfect); AC 15; Atk 1 (see below) Face/Reach 5'x5'; SA Malevolence, darkvision 120', spell use, shadow track; SQ undead, incorporeal, DR 15/+1 SR 15 AL NE SV Fort +2 Ref +7 Will + 5 Str - Con - Dex 20 Int 16 Wis 10 Cha 16 Skills and Feats:

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Hide +12 (or see below), Listen +10, Search +10, Spot +10. Improved Initiative, Dodge.

*Spell-like abilities:* At will: darkness 3/day: minor image 1/day: phantasmal killer, 1/week: shadow walk.

**Malevolence (Su):** This is the same as the ghost ability; the magic jar is cast as a 12th level sorcerer.

**Shadow Track (Su):** If the object of the umbrucha's search is in shadow (rather than complete illumination or complete darkness), the umbrucha knows exactly which direction it must proceed in to reach its target. It does NOT know the best or quickest route to reach its target-only in which direction it must proceed to reach it. This ability does not work across domain boundaries.

When a Brother of the Fraternity has trespassed against its laws and is deemed worthy of death, the Fathers of the Fraternity dispatch an umbrucha to bring him to justice. They provide the umbrucha with an article belonging to the erstwhile brother, activating its Shadow Track ability, and then allow it to pursue its work, telling it where the brother was last seen and where to look for him. The umbrucha is highly intelligent; it can follow complex instructions and reason for itself, but it has no self-will at all and never disobeys the orders given it by the Umbra. The umbrucha will usually travel in its natural form by night, then use its malevolence ability (Will Save DC 16) to hijack a random bystander and continue the pursuit during the day.

While in a human host the umbrucha loses its Hide ability, takes the Str, Con, and Dex scores of the host, and cannot use its shadow walk ability. The host does NOT gain any of the umbrucha's special qualities. The host may make another Will save every morning at dawn to attempt to regain control of its body; if it succeeds, the umbrucha is ejected from its host and cannot use its malevolence ability on that person for 24 hours. The umbrucha can voluntarily leave its host at any time, and it can

be forcibly expelled by remove curse or similar spells.

When the umbrucha finds its target, it will often approach the object of its search in a human host, leave the host, and use its malevolence attack on the unfortunate former Brother of the Fraternity. (The save DC against the malevolence ability for the object of its hunt is DC 22.) If the attack fails it will flee and attempt to take over the Brother's body on a later occasion. (It can use the malevolence ability once per day per target.)

If attacked, the umbrucha will attempt to use its malevolence ability on one of its attackers and counterattack; it will also freely use its minor image and phantasmal killer abilities. (Note that any damage done to a possessed host does not affect the umbrucha.) If the umbrucha finds itself in danger of being destroyed it will attempt to flee.

When the umbrucha succeeds in dominating its target it will force the Brother it controls to return to a pre-arranged meeting place, where the Fathers of the Fraternity await. If it appears that it will be unsuccessful in bringing the Brother back, it will cause him to commit suicide, leave the body, and return to the Fathers to give its report.

The Umbrucha are formed by a special ritual performed only by the Fathers of the Fraternity of Shadows; when a brother marked for execution is brought to them by an umbrucha, they use arcane and horrifying magics to merge that brother's life force with his shadow, leaving his body an empty husk. The resulting creature is a new umbrucha, bound to the service of the Fraternity in unlife because of his faithlessness in life.

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## The Fraternity and Schools of Magic

The Fraternity's emphasis on illusion magic is explained largely by their history and their philosophy; similarly, they absolutely forbid the study of necromancy for practical and philosophical reasons. It quickly came to the attention of the Fathers of the Fraternity that those who dabbled in necromancy were subject to strange side effects, both mental and physical; the Fathers quickly realized that the creators of their world were drawn to the study of necromancy and paid special attention to its practitioners, and they therefore forbade its study. There is also a general feeling that the study of the dead, with its necessary emphasis on the body, runs counter to the Fraternity's emphasis on the mind, and the study of necromancy is discouraged on that basis as well.

Other than illusionary magic, many members of the Fraternity focus their study on enchantment, which is regarded as a suitably "mentally-oriented" branch of magic. Abjuration and divination are also widely studied. Transmutation and, to a lesser degree, conjuration and evocation are looked down upon as being overly interested in gross matter.

## The Fraternity and Other Secret Societies

The Fraternity of Shadows, as one of the major secret societies of Ravenloft, has often come into conflict with other secret societies; the following ideas may be useful in inspiring Dungeon Masters as beginning points for these complicated and subtle contests between groups.

*The Kargat and the Kargatane:* The enmity between the Kargat and the Fraternity is of long standing. On occasion, the two groups find it useful or necessary to aid each other, especially in the face of the rise of the Unholy Order of the Grave. The two groups are currently not actively antagonistic, but each makes it a point to know

as much as possible about the activities of the other.

*The Unholy Order of the Grave:* The Fraternity and the Order are inimical to each other; each makes the destruction of the other one of its principal goals to achieving its other ends. Their struggle is playing out slowly throughout the Core; the members of the Unholy Order of the Grave have the great advantage of being immune to the illusionist magic most common in the Fraternity, but the Fraternity is older, entrenched, and has more contacts and resources. The struggle between the Kargat and the Order also tends to keep both in check, to the Fraternity's advantage.

*The Vistani:* For the most part, the Fraternity maintains an uneasy truce with the Vistani. Each group respects the other's knowledge of the Demiplane; the Fraternity regard the Vistani as the most intelligent, real, and formidable humans not in the Fraternity, while the Vistani grudgingly concede that members of the Fraternity are better-informed, more interesting, and more dangerous than nearly all other gorgios. They have been known to cooperate when their interests momentarily coincide, but generally the two groups do their best to avoid each other.

*The Church of Ezra:* Generally speaking, the Ezran church has little understanding of or interaction with the Fraternity, although the Inquisition has swept a few Brothers of the Fraternity into its net. The struggle between the Church and the Fraternity is actually mostly conducted at a philosophical level in high society, in debates between anchorites and academics. The Ezran church, of course, is opposed to the Fraternity's humanistic, solipsistic philosophy; similarly, the Fraternity desires to control the minds of others, and the Ezran religion is a major impediment to that goal since it replaces the Fraternity's ideas and philosophies with its own.

*The Circle:* The Fraternity has sometimes attempted, with mixed success, to direct the Circle toward targets of their own choosing

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(especially among the Kargat and the Unholy Order). They have, so far, successfully avoided attracting the attention of the Circle toward themselves; as seemingly ordinary philosophers and academics they attract relatively little attention compared to the more obvious evils of the undead, lycanthropes, and so forth common in other evil secret societies.

*Carnival, The Green Hand, Keepers of the Black Feather:* The Fraternity has had little interaction with these groups; the goals of these groups are quite specific, as opposed to the Fraternity's more grandiose schemes. It is conceivable that the Fraternity might take an interest in lending a hand--or opposing--any of these groups. If, for example, they wished to thwart a certain plan of the Gentleman Caller's they might cooperate briefly with the Carnival; but in general their plans overlap very little.

## Understanding of the Demiplane

The members of the Fraternity of Shadows know more than almost anyone about the nature of the Demiplane of Dread and its inhabitants. The Dungeon Master is encouraged to decide for himself exactly how much the Fraternity knows of the metaphysics of Ravenloft; the following ideas might serve as a starting point.

*The Dark Powers:* The Fraternity believe that the Demiplane of Dread is the mental creation of some divine or demonic personality or personalities, which they refer to as "The Watchers" or "The Watchers in Shadow". Exactly why those "personalities" chose to create the Demiplane and what they intend to do with it is the subject of much debate. The Fraternity know that the Watchers take an active interest in certain activities, such as necromancy, murder, betrayal, and so forth, and "punish" those who participate in such activities (that is to say, brothers of the Fraternity understand something of the rationale behind powers checks); since they wish to avoid the attention of the Watchers, they avoid such things (especially

necromancy) as much as possible.

*Domains:* The Fraternity knows that domain boundaries are not just political; in fact, they are fairly certain that each domain centers on a single personality. Some feel that the goal of the Fraternity ought to be to cause each domain to center on a member of the Fraternity, while others disagree. The Fraternity has some idea of who is the dominating personality of the domain in many cases, although when the darklord is an obscure or little known figure they are unlikely to know. (Some members discredit the "personality" theory on this basis and believe that each domain is centered on an idea or theme, rather than a personality. Again, this is a subject of much debate among Fraternity members.)

*Domain Politics:* Members of the Fraternity are likely to have as good idea as anyone of the political situation within a domain and between domains; their frequent presence in the highest intellectual circles of their home domains leaves them ideally placed to keep a finger on the pulse of public opinion, and they actively seek out sources of information from both the upper and lower classes.

*Creatures of the Night:* Those of the Fraternity who travel widely or who perform field research in archaeology, anthropology, cartography or similarly dangerous fields are well acquainted with the work of Dr. Rudolph van Richten and Gennifer and Laura Weathermay-Foxgrove. (In fact, Lord de Casteelle and other Fraternity members have actually assisted van Richten and his nieces in compiling information useful in combating the creatures of the night.) Those whose work does not bring them into danger regularly can still put their hands on a wealth of information on combating virtually any opponent, if they have the opportunity to consult with their fraternal brothers in time. Brothers of the Fraternity are among the most informed of any in the Demiplane on such subjects.

## Aims of the Fraternity



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The Fraternity of Shadows desires nothing less than to dominate the entire Demiplane of Dread and create it in their own image; they intend to achieve this goal by following two strategies. First of all, they intend to learn as much as possible about the nature of the Demiplane, the better to manipulate it to their own ends; second, they intend to gain as much power as possible over the thoughts and ideas of their fellow creatures. They do this partly by spreading their philosophy throughout society and partly by attempting to get and hold political power in the domains in which they are more entrenched. They can be used either as employers of adventurers or as opponents (or both!).

## Adventure Hooks:

- ◆ **Darkon:** Local conditions have led to a war of subterfuge between the Fraternity of Shadows and the Unholy Order of the Grave in Nevuchar Springs; one group hires the PCs to infiltrate the other's hideout and learn their weaknesses. (Each will, of course, tell the truth about the other organization--that they are evil and power-hungry to the core--and attempt to disguise the truth about themselves.) However, if Bastion Raines discovers that the party is affiliated with either the "evil sorcerers" or the "servants of Darkness", the party may find themselves the target of his Inquisition.
- ◆ **Falkovnia:** The Fraternity members of the Radiant Tower have decided to lend their support to an attempt to overthrow Vlad Drakov, in the hope of putting a puppet of their own on the throne of Falkovnia. They involve the player characters by portraying themselves as freedom fighters and asking for the PCs support; once the revolution is complete, of course, they may find it more convenient to have the PCs permanently out of the way.
- ◆ **Nova Vaasa:** The Fraternity has arranged to assist Malken in creating and activating the Apparatus, to free him forever of his "host" in the Hiregaard family. They hire the player characters to find and bring them the activating Rod of Rastinon.
- ◆ **Dementlieu:** Dominic d'Honaire suspects that all is not well at the University of Dementlieu; he believes that his long-time nemesis may, in fact, be Lord Balfour de Casteelle. He approaches the player characters and asks them to investigate Lord de Casteelle's activities; once his link to the Fraternity and the Fraternity's aims, become apparent, d'Honaire will attempt to use the PCs to find the rest of the Fraternity members in Dementlieu, while the Fraternity will attempt to find and to neutralize them.
- ◆ **Invidia:** The Fraternity believe that they have found a way to kill Malocchio Aderre, who follows hard on Azalin's heels on their "hit list" of persons who can interfere with their ultimate goal. They don't intend to test it themselves, of course, but they will certainly arrange for the information to come into the hands of eager heroes--perhaps through the hands of a friendly Vistana seer.
- ◆ **Borca:** The Fraternity are backing Ivan Dilisnya against his cousin Ivana in their power struggle; when a Fraternity member is found poisoned in his bed, Ivan commissions the player characters to investigate, and the trail eventually leads them to Natalya Romaine...
- ◆ **Kartakass, Barovia:** Harkon Lukas still remembers the defeat that he suffered at the hands of Strahd von Zarovich when he first entered the Demiplane, but he may have found the way to gain revenge. The Fraternity of Shadows has informed him that Sergei's sunblade is now in Kartakass; Lukas arranges for the blade to fall into the hands of a band of heroes, and the heroes are encouraged to enter Castle Ravenloft and kill Strahd with the assistance of a Fraternity member and one of Lukas' wolfwere lieutenants.

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- ◆ **Hazlan:** The party has been approached by the Order of Guardians to get their help in obtaining the Rift Spanner, currently owned by a Hazlani mage. After they succeed, they deliver the artifact to their arranged contact--only to discover later that the person to whom they gave the Rift Spanner was actually a member of the Fraternity of Shadows posing as a member of the Order. The Order of Guardians and the player characters must join forces to re-obtain the artifact and prevent it from being used.
- ◆ **Nosos:** The Fraternity has decided to attempt to "take over" an Island of Terror and have settled on Nosus, where they have several members. They have identified Malus Scleris as the key personality of the domain and intend to kidnap him and make him the focus of a ritual designed to pass the darklordship of the domain to one of the Fraternity members. The player characters (possibly while under the influence of Malus' charm ability) discover the plot and are forced to find some way to thwart it.

## Fraternity of Shadows Prestige Class

**Hit dice:** d4

**Skill points:** 2 + Int

An initiate into the Fraternity of Shadows must be a wizard or sorcerer of neutral evil alignment with at least 8 ranks in Knowledge: Ravenloft and Knowledge: Arcana. Necromancers are absolutely forbidden; other specialist wizards are welcome, but only illusionists are allowed to pass beyond seventh level. In addition to acquiring experience points sufficient to advance to the next level, a wizard wishing to gain a level in the Fraternity of Shadows must make some major presentation to a group of his peers which shows some new insight into the Demiplane of Dread AND must receive the approval of at least three members of a rank higher than his own. (For example, a wizard wishing to go from 2nd to 3rd level in the Fraternity of Shadows is gaining a level as a Brother of the order, so he must gain the approval of at least three brothers with ranking of Honored Brother or higher.) The brothers who endorse him for advancement in level will initiate him in the knowledge necessary for his progress to the new level.

Level	Title	BAB	Fort	Ref	Wis	Class features
1st level	Brother Initiate	0	0	0	0	2 Lore of the Fraternity, bonus feat, sigil ring
2nd level	Brother	1	0	0	0	3 Lore of the Fraternity
3rd level		1	1	1	1	3 Lore of the Fraternity, bonus feat
4th level	Honored Brother	2	1	1	1	4 Lore of the Fraternity
5th level		2	1	1	1	4 Lore of the Fraternity, slippery mind
6th level	Esteemed Brother	3	2	2	2	5 Lore of the Fraternity, bonus feat
7th level		3	2	2	2	5 Lore of the Fraternity
8th level	Exalted Brother	4	2	2	2	6 Lore of the Fraternity, Mental Shadow
9th level		4	3	3	3	6 Lore of the Fraternity, bonus feat
10th level	Father	5	3	3	3	7 Lore of the Fraternity, Shadowform

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At each level the Brother gains a level of spellcasting ability in whatever spellcasting class (wizard, specialist wizard, or sorcerer only) he had before entering the Fraternity.

**Lore of the Fraternity:** A Brother of the Fraternity of Shadows automatically gains 1 rank in Knowledge: Ravenloft and 1 rank in any one other Knowledge skill of the Brother's choice for every level he attains in the Fraternity.

**Sigil Ring:** At 1st level the Initiate receives a silver ring that allows him to cast the spell deeper darkness three times per day as a free action. This ring will not function for any other person and is the symbol of his membership in the Fraternity.

**Bonus feats:** The Brother gains a bonus feat at 1st, 3rd, 6th, and 9th levels. This feat must be taken from the following list: Any metamagic feat, Iron Will, Skill Focus (only for any wizard class skill), Spell Focus, Spell Mastery, Spell Penetration.

**Slippery Mind:** At the 5th level the Honored Brother of the Fraternity has reached a degree of mental conditioning that allow him the chance to avoid the mental enthrallments of others. This is the same as the rogue ability Slippery Mind.

**Mental Shadow:** At 8th level, the Exalted Brother of the Fraternity of Shadows gains the ability to dissociate mind and body. This creates a mental shadow separate from the body, which can move and act as the wizard, with certain advantages and disadvantages. Use of this ability requires five minutes of uninterrupted concentration to activate.

The mental shadow functions in some ways as a 2nd magnitude ghost; it is effectively a projection of the Exalted Brother's mind into the ethereal plane, and it is therefore incorporeal, able to become visible or invisible at will and walk through structures with an ethereal resonance of 1. The mental shadow can only be harmed by enchanted weapons or spells; it has hit points, armor class, and movement rates

equal to the wizard's. It can manipulate physical objects as a 2nd magnitude ghost (i.e., it can handle objects of 10 pounds or less, open normal doors, etc.) It casts spells normally.

*Equipment:* The Exalted Brother using this ability can create the mental shadow of one pound of equipment per point of Wisdom to equip the mental shadow with clothes, spell components, and so forth. Any item so "created" must be physically present with the wizard when he creates the mental shadow of himself.

*Duration:* Theoretically the Exalted Brother may remain outside his body for any length of time, but there are two practical limits. First, while the mental shadow is separated from the body the body remains in a comatose state; it can live without water for as long as five days, due to decreased metabolism, but it will eventually expire, leaving the Brother trapped as a second-magnitude ghost for all eternity. Less dramatically, the Brother may remain outside his body for a number of hours equal to his Wisdom score; if he passes that mark he runs a one percent chance per additional hour of failing a Madness check on returning to his body. (For example, if a Brother with Wisdom 15 remains outside his body for 24 hours, he has a 9% chance (24-15) of failing a Madness check on returning to his body.)

*Frequency of use:* The Exalted Brother using this ability must rest (some activity, but no exertion and no spellcasting) for six hours for every hour that he spent in mental shadow form. If he does not rest, all his arcane spells have an additional 10% chance of failure. He cannot re-enter mental shadow form until he takes adequate rest.

*Drawbacks:* The Exalted Brother using this ability runs several risks. If the mental shadow takes damage equal to the Brother's hit points, he automatically fails a Madness save and cannot use the Shadowform ability for 3-6 months. In addition, the Brother using this ability has no control over what is happening to his body while his consciousness is elsewhere. If his body hears loud noises, is shaken, and so



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forth, it will alert him that something is wrong, but he must return to his body in some "normal" way--walking, teleportation, etc.--to find out what is going on. Use of this ability may, therefore, place the Brother in a vulnerable position.

**Shadowform:** A Father of the Fraternity of Shadows has achieved the mastery of mind over body and is able to bring his whole body into and out of the ethereal plane at will; this is a full-round action. Add the Ghost template to the character when shifted into the ethereal plane, with the following changes: the Father gains only the abilities of Manifestation and

Telekinesis, and any spell he casts while ethereal have their normal effect on physical objects and persons. A Father of the Fraternity no longer ages and is not subject to bodily illness (including supernatural diseases such as mummy rot, but NOT including disease-like curses such as lycanthropy).



## SOME MEMBERS OF THE FRATERNITY OF SHADOWS

By: The USS editors

Five members of the  
Fraternity of Shadows,  
with their hidden  
agendas...

Dr. Dhurban Ananda

Excerpts from Prof. Dr. Dhurban Ananda's  
personal journal:

*"January 3rd: I finally have it! My group was decimated and I left the two surviving warriors to cover my escape from those accursed guardians – should they be still alive, they would be cursing me with all their souls, no doubt – but I safely made out of the forest and now I can dedicate my time and intellectual efforts to unravel the mysteries of this finely crafted crossbow bolt. I must find its secrets, understand its powers!"*

*February 15th: Although I certainly improved my skills in the realm of magic over the last few days, but I suspect whatever curse my former companions must have bestowed upon me with their dying words should be at work, for this wracking pain is almost unbearable. My personal physician did not find anything unusual besides the yellow spots on my left eye and the strange hairs that are sprouting on unlikely places in my body. His herbal remedies give me little relief from this pain. I must not let it get on the way of my work!*

*March 12th: Unacceptable! That stupid doctor had no answers at all! And the books at his library were devoid of useful knowledge in this*

*important matter. Anyway, no one will miss him. I must turn my full attention to the research at hand, for I suspect the enchanted bolt will be the key to a most critical discovery. The pain makes it difficult even to breathe, and concentrating in magic is almost impossible, but I must succeed, must identify something in this artifact. And I must study hard, for the Fraternity's meeting approaches! My father is constantly reminding me of the delay in the results of my studies. That old vulture only wants me to give him something he can show to the Brothers and gain their respect for my work! But all that will change, soon.*

*April 30th: I have successfully turned everyone's attention to a "rogue tiger" attacking farmers and travelers. My illusions are powerful enough to cover my ailment, but they are hard to maintain. I must avoid father's visits for a while. Now my hands have grown feline claws! That happened right after I feasted upon the children of that farm. I surely have done them a favor, as they now will not suffer the same fate of my family, in the hands of those damned priestesses of Kali.*

*I know I have not been attacked by a cursed tiger, so how come this is happening to me? The ancient texts on the dread disease do not say anything about slow transfiguration, and ginseng flowers do not cause me any adverse effects. I am confused, but at least the pain has subdued.*

*May 25th: I know my mission, I know my destiny. I must use the sacred bolt of Ravana to strike down that traitorous priest and self-appointed "maharaja" Arijani. I must find a way to lure him out of his fortified temple and trap him in a place where he will be vulnerable*

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*to my deadly, holy weapon. Ravana will surely smile upon me for ridding the world of the Accursed One. And the Fraternity will surely cheer me for taking over Sri Raji.*

*June 30th: Today the most unusual thing happened. I am free from my stepfather, free to pursue my own objectives, make use of his personal fortune and intellectual resources for my purposes! And best of all, not a Brother will ever suspect I had anything to do with the death of my “beloved father”.*

*However, this came with a grim price: my cunning former mentor secretly found the remaining members of my family, and hired them as guardians. I had to cross through them to reach him. I cannot forget the look of realization of my oldest brother, Sajeen, as he recognized me even through my physical changes and my disguise. I had to silence him, I had to! I do not wish to hear his screams, his pleas anymore! He and Ramash visit me in my nightmares, but I shall not be turned aside by this, they will soon be lost memories. My purpose is clear, and once I have avenged our sisters, they will surely forgive me. The power is at hand, I must fulfill my holy mission, at the expense of anyone, anything! No one will deny me my vengeance!”*

**Prof. Dr. Dhurban Ananda**  
**Professor of Ancient Languages, Great University of Tvashtri**  
**Brother of the Fraternity of Shadows**

**Male Half-Fiend (stage four of transposition with Rakshasa) Rog1/III5/FoS3:** CR11; Medium-size outsider (Evil) (5ft., 10 in. tall); HD 1d6+3 plus 8d4+24; hp 51; Init +5 (+5 Dex); Spd. 40 ft.; AC 28 (+5 Dex, +9 natural, +2 ring, +2 bracers); Atk +6 (1d4+3, 2 claws) / +1 (1d6+1, bite) melee or +8 (1d4+4, +1 dagger of returning) ranged; SA detect thoughts, phantasmal killer, spells; SQ alternate form, DR 10/+2( ), improved dread familiar (fiendish viper, “Radji”), phylactery, reality wrinkle (4,500-foot-radius), spell immunity, vulnerable to blessed crossbow bolts; AL NE; SV Fort +5,

Ref +9, Will +11; Str 16, Dex 20, Con 16, Int 22 (24 w/ turban), Wis 13, Cha 18(\*).

( ) A blessed crossbow bolt ignores his damage reduction (see text).

(\*) If seen in true form, Dhurban has OR 3 due to his monstrous appearance.

*Skills and Feats:* Alchemy +10, Appraise +6, Balance +5, Bluff +14 (+18), Climb +5, Concentration +10, Decipher Script +10, Diplomacy +8, Disable Device +10, Disguise +14 (+28), Escape Artist +5, Gather Information +4, Hide +6, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (Arcana) +14, Knowledge (Ravenloft) +17, Knowledge (Local, Sri Raji) +10, Knowledge (Nature) +9, Jump +7, Listen +6, Move Silently +6, Open Lock +9, Perform (flute) +5, Pick Pocket +7, Scry +10, Search +6, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +11 (+13 for Illusion spells), Spot +6, Tumble +10, Use Magic Device +9, Wilderness Lore +5. Alertness, Brew Potion, Craft Wondrous Item, Improved Familiar, Iron Will, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Skill Focus (Spellcraft), Spell Focus (Illusion), Spell Mastery (Burning Hands, Charm Monster, Color Spray, Hypnotic Pattern, Invisibility), Spell Penetration.

*Languages:* Rajian\*, Infernal, Draconic, Mordentish.

*Wizard Spells per Day:* 5/7/6/5/4 (extra daily Illusion spell included) Base DC = 16 + spell level (18 + spell level for Illusions). Caster level 8th. Forbidden school: Evocation.

*Spellbook:* 0 – all; 1st – Charm Person, Change Self(2), Chill Touch(1), Color Spray(2), Detect Undead, Grease, Hypnotism, Identify, Mage Armor, Nystul’s Magical Aura (2), Nystul’s Undetectable Aura(2), Ray of Enfeeblement, Shocking Grasp(1), Unseen Servant, Ventriloquism(2); 2nd – Alter Self, Blur(2), Cat’s Grace, Ghoul Touch(1), Glitterdust, Hypnotic Pattern(2), Invisibility(2), Knock, Minor Image(2), Mirror Image(2), Scare, Summon Swarm; 3rd – Dispel Magic, Displacement(2), Gaseous Form, Hold Person, Illusionary Script(2), Invisibility Sphere(2),

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Magic Circle against Good, Major Image(2), Suggestion, Vampiric Touch(1); 4th – Charm Monster, Confusion, Contagion(1), Enervation, Illusory Wall(2), Improved Invisibility(2), Phantasmal Killer(2), Polymorph Self, Scrying, Shadow Conjunction(2).

*Signature Possessions:* sigil ring of the Fraternity of Shadows (10th-level Deeper Darkness, 3/day); ring of protection +2, bracelets of armor +2 (as bracers), turban of intellect +2 (as tiara), ivory cane of vanishing (teleport w/ error, 47 charges), +1 dagger of returning.

- 1) Touch spells that can be cast through snake familiar.
- 2) Illusion spells.

## Appearance

After the initial stages of transposition, Dhurban has been making extensive use of illusions, and lately, of his Alter Self ability, to look nearly as he was before the change. His image is that of an exotic, elegant Rajian man on his mid-thirties. His eyes are emerald green, a rarity among the people of his country. His carefully trimmed short hair is black and lustrous, but few people ever see it, since Dhurban makes a point of always be wearing a black and orange turban with a small ruby. As with several men of his age, he sports an also well-trimmed goatee. He always appears in public in fine, colorful clothes, usually made of the best silk instead of cotton, and always carries a white cane that seems to be made of ivory, its upper side sculpted as a king cobra with rubies for eyes. If entertaining guests from other domains, especially the Core, he prefers to dress in a Renaissance-styled white linen suit, with an orange and black semitransparent silk sash crossing over diagonally, from his right shoulder to the left side.

In his true form, Dhurban is a scary creature. His nose is triangular and flat like that of a cat, connecting with his divided upper lip. His black hair grows wild down to his shoulders, all stripped in orange like tiger fur, and bushy

sideburns of the same colors appear below his cheeks. His right eye remains the same color, but his left eye turns sickly yellow. Soft, short orange and black hair covers his entire body, and his hands become vicious furry claws. His fangs grow to two inches in length. His body becomes more muscular. All in all, he looks like a sick yet strong weretiger in hybrid form.

## Background

The man known as Professor Doctor Dhurban Ananda did not begin his life in a wealthy family and did not attend an academy, as he uses to tell those around him. Instead, he was simply Jamal, the seventh son of a sudra family of rice farmers, living in the outskirts of Tvashtri. Like all his three brothers and three sisters, he had to work from an early age, suffering mistreats in the hands of the local landlord, a member of an upper caste. He grew up hating his own condition and the Rajian society in general. When his father was stricken with a deadly strain of jungle fever, Jamal (who was seven years old) and his siblings were thrown out of their lands and started a life of begging in the streets of Tvashtri. He saw two of his sisters be chosen as sacrifices to Kali and was totally unable to do anything about it.

Eventually, Jamal decided to become a thief, focusing on petty thievery, burglary and picking pockets. All this changed when he attempted to break into the house of a wealthy professor of the Great University. He was subdued by a complex web of programmed illusions and magic traps, but not without fighting back and even disarming a couple of traps. The owner of the house, Professor Shakhana Ananda, was amazed to see an 8-year-old beggar with such skill and intelligence, so he decided to “tame the little beast” and turn him into a special project. He took the boy as if he were his own son, forging documents to prove it, and renamed the boy Dhurban.

The professor did not do this out of goodness or charity, however, but rather as a joke to Rajian high society. Also, he used Dhurban’s roguish skills every once in a while

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to “collect” special items and discoveries from colleagues. He paid special attention to archeological stuff and objects of art. Dhurban himself developed into some of a collector, too, easily accepting the new life offered to him. He never truly liked Professor Ananda, but respected him and took as much advantage as he could from the education and wealth his new position granted him. He totally isolated himself from the streets of Tvashti and avoided his remaining family members altogether, imagining that they would ruin his new life if they knew about it.

Professor Ananda himself taught Dhurban to read and write, and gave him a fast training in order to let him attend a board school with the children of other rich families. Even though he was quite intelligent and learned fast, Dhurban never quite fit in the new environment, however, as he still felt contempt for the spoiled young men and women. He saw himself as a superior being, as he had come from a lower caste and survived their world for years, while not one of them would probably survive a week in his. He had to use the best of his cunning and bluffing to avoid suspicious looks.

But, most of all, Dhurban was fascinated by the magical traps and illusions his mentor had to protect the manor house. As grew up, he conquered enough of Professor Ananda’s confidence to be initiated into the Art. After a few years of practicing in parallel with his mundane studies, Dhurban became a skilled illusionist. When he ended his initial studies at the Great University, his stepfather introduced him to a new level of knowledge, that of the Fraternity of Shadows.

As he pursued a Doctorate in Ancient Languages, Dhurban also entered the first rank of the Fraternity, specializing in exploring trips to the deep jungles and archeological research. He was taught the legend of Ravana’s Bane and was thrilled by the idea of finding the weapon. After a few years of research, he finally managed to accompany a band of adventurers into the jungle and retrieve the artifact.

Dhurban’s selfish heart was an easy prey for the rakshasa who connected with his mind. He felt the spirit clawing at his very soul and change his body, but the surge of power seemed worthwhile. More and more, the idea of using the weapon to kill Maharaja Arijani – with the plausible reason of revenge for the sacrifice of his two sisters – grew up in his mind. His aging mentor noticed that there was something wrong with him, but failed to perceive the truth of the matter until it was too late. Trying to unsettle the younger man, Professor Ananda found Dhurban’s older brothers and hired them as servants and personal guards.

Dhurban had developed a taste for human flesh and arranged a research trip for his suspecting father through a yet unknown part of the jungle, ambushing the caravan himself. He made it look like a tiger attack, but when he approached the old illusionist, he recognized his own brothers as his guardians. Dhurban did not think twice and quickly maimed them on his way to his stepfather. After he devoured Professor Ananda, he turned to his bleeding brothers, ending his gruesome task and consuming them. That action sealed the fourth stage of the transposition.

Unfortunately for Dhurban, during his journey back to Tvashti, the monks who had sworn to protect Ravana’s Bane finally tracked him down and managed to recover the bolt, almost using it against him. He managed to kill a few monks on his way out of the jungle and returned home.

## Current Sketch

After barely escaping with his life, Dhurban decided to keep a low profile (a difficult task at best, since Arijani has sensed the “4,500-foot-radius blind spot” in Tvashti and has sent several of his spies to investigate) and take advantage of the resources of the Fraternity to eventually recover the artifact and use it against Arijani. The rakshasa’s mind constantly whispers promises of power and revenge in his mind, and he already thinks of these thoughts as his own. The exposure to the fiendish mind has

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unbalanced his own, and he wants nothing less than to take over Sri Raji and the entire world. To achieve this goal, he believes the Fraternity will serve him well for the time being, so he is willing to leave Sri Raji for the time being and study with his peers in Richemulot or Dementlieu.

## Combat

Dhurban shuns close combat and prefers to subdue his opponents rather than kill them immediately, but he will not hesitate to do so if he feels threatened. He has added the rakshasa's contempt for mortals to his own feelings of scorn for society and because of this he may tend to underestimate his foes unless they have magical abilities.

Dhurban has a wide variety of spells he learned both from his stepfather's spellbooks and from the libraries of the Fraternity of Shadows.

**Alternate Form (Su):** Dhurban can assume any humanoid form or revert to his own form as a standard action. This ability is similar to the Alter Self spell cast by an 18th-level sorcerer, but he can maintain this new form nearly indefinitely. Once every 24 hours, however, he must return to his own form and remain like this for eight full hours before using this ability again. He usually reverts to his true appearance to rest before preparing his spells. Because of this, he never accepts invitations to sleep at somebody else's home unless he can be sure of his own privacy and isolation during his sleep.

**Detect Thoughts (Su):** Dhurban can continuously Detect Thoughts as the spell cast by an 18th-level sorcerer (save DC18). He can suppress or resume this ability once per round as a free action.

**Phantasmal Killer (Sp):** Dhurban can cast Phantasmal Killer three times per day, as a standard action. This ability works as the spell cast by an 18th-level sorcerer (save DC18), but the phantasmal killer cannot be turned against him. He recently acquired this ability as the

result of his dabbling into Power Rituals. He can summon the Phantasmal Killer anywhere inside his reality wrinkle and has already used it to get rid of more than one of Arijani's spies.

**Phylactery (Su):** Dhurban's sigil Ring of the Fraternity of Shadows serves as his phylactery. The ring has been magically strengthened and reinforced while Dhurban progressed in his corruption, and it currently has hardness of 20, 50hp and a break DC of 40.

**Spell Immunity (Su):** Dhurban is immune to spells and spell-like abilities of 4th level or less, as if the spellcaster or creature had failed to overcome spell resistance. He is not immune to his own spells.

**Vulnerable to Blessed Crossbow Bolts (Ex):** If hit by a blessed crossbow bolt (which ignores his damage reduction), Dhurban must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + hp of damage suffered). If he fails, he is instantly slain; if he succeeds, he receives additional 3d6hp of damage from the hit, 6d6hp on a critical hit.

## Radji

**Fiendish Viper, Improved Dread Familiar:** CR 4; Tiny outsider (Evil) (1 ft. long); HD 8; hp 25; Init +3 (Dex); Spd. 15 ft., climb 15 ft., swim 15 ft.; AC 21 (+2 size, +3 Dex, +6 natural); Atk +11 melee (poison bite); SA poison (DC11, dmg temp 1d6Con/1d6Con), share spells, smite good, touch; SQ empathic link, darkvision 60 ft., improved evasion, cold and fire resistance 15, DR 5/+2, speak with master, speak with snakes, SR 16; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +9, Will +11; Str 6, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 9, Wis 12, Cha 2. Skills and Feats: Balance +19, Climb +14, Hide +20, Listen +16, Spot +16, Wilderness Lore +12. Dodge, Weapon Finesse (bite).



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## Viktor Hazan,

**Professor of Professor of Philosophy and Numbers, University of Richemulot  
Brother of the Fraternity of Shadows**

**Male human, illus 5th / FoS 6th**, Neutral Evil; Medium size, CR 11, HD 11d4 hp 39 Initiative Spd 30 ft; AC 13 (+3 dex); Atk 1, +3/+0; Face/Reach 5'x5'; SA spells SQ slippery mind AL NE; SV Fort +4 Ref +4 Will +16 (+4 wisdom, +2 Iron will); Str 11 Con 10 Dex 16 Int 18 Wis 19 Cha 17

*Skills and Feats:* Alchemy +3, Concentration +9, Craft +6, Diplomacy +4, Gather information +4, Knowledge (arcane) +18, Knowledge (Ravenloft) +18, Profession +10, Scan +8, Spellcraft +9 (+2 illusion), Swim +2

Brew Potion, Enlarge spell, Empower spell, Extend spell, Heighten spell, Iron Will, Run, Summon familiar, Scribe Scroll, Slippery Mind, Spell Mastery (color spray, invisibility, mirror image)

*Weapons:* Dagger (1d4, crit 19-20/x2, 10 ft., 1 lb., Tiny, Piercing). Light crossbow (1d8, crit 19-20/x2, 80 ft., 6 lb., Piercing)

*Signature possession:* Fraternity of Shadow sigil ring, spellbook, black tinted reading glasses.

*Languages:* Mordentish, Darkonese, Falkovnian, Lamordian, Vaasi,

*Spells:* 5/5/5/4/3/2 (incl. +1 spec. per level) (all except Abjuration and Necromancy)

1st level: Color Spray, Nystul's Magical Aura, Nystul's Undetectable Aura, Silent Image Unseen Servant.; 2nd level: Fog Cloud, Glitterdust, Hypnotic Pattern, Invisibility, Minor Image, Mirror Image; 3rd level: Illusory Script, Invisibility Sphere, Lightning Bolt, Major Image, Phantom Steed; 4th level: Hallucinatory Terrain, Illusory Wall, Phantasmal Killer, Shadow Conjunction; 5th level: Greater Shadow Conjunction, Shadow Evocation; 6th level: Mislead, Project Image

## Appearance

Viktor Hazan is in his early fifties, short and thin. His salt-and-pepper hair is unusually long for a university professor and often left uncombed and flowing in all directions. At first, he appear disorganized (a false impression), calm and gentle. His manners are somewhat old fashioned, but in contrast he often uses the latest slang in his students' expressions. His sense of humor is caustic and he doesn't hesitate to make fun of himself or his university superiors. Needless to say, the university students love him.

He usually wear the snobbish clothing of Dementelieu high society when at the University of Richemulot, or in social parties. His well kept clothing contrast with his unruly hair.

When fishing (his favorite social activity outside of the university), he uses much less formal wear. To the ire of his university colleagues, he often goes fishing for an afternoon without noticing anyone of his absence. Once or twice per year, he does it with his whole class, making them loose a whole afternoon spent quietly fishing and discussing philosophical concepts, while the other professors wait in vain!

However, when he is in the Fraternity of Shadows context, his facial expression looses all gentleness and he seem to have a wasp's venom and malice.

## Background history

After his grade in philosophy and numbers at the Richemulot University, the young Viktor went to the service of a Dementelieu nobility, Count Wilhelm von Lovenhorst. His first years at his service in Porta-Lucine were used by the Count for diplomacy purposes, sending Viktor to negotiate for him on countless number of important subject and errands, often in Darkon, where the Count originated. Viktor Hazan executed these tasks with great ease, using his diplomatic skills for his master. During these years, he also

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developed magical skills, that were encouraged by the Count... Hazan fell in love with the concept of illusions and figments, and those spells now makes the bulk, if not all, of his spells.

However, during all those years, the Count never said a word to Viktor about the Fraternity of Shadows, of which he was an important member. But when it had been 4 years Viktor was at his service, the Count felt Viktor could take more and that this young, ambitious man could be involved in the secret order. He had total confidence in him. So the Count took his young secretary for dinner at one of Dementelieu's private club. There, the Count explained Viktor some founding concepts of the Fraternity of Shadows. Viktor knew he was being tested in a way and took the proposed concepts and developed them in an innovative way that pleased his old mentor. The principles of the Fraternity fascinated Viktor and he soon became a member of the Fraternity of Shadows.

After the Count's mysterious disappearance in 742, Viktor left the von Lovenhorst family and officially went in Richemulot as a teacher for the university. In fact, Hazan went there to be part of one of the most active cells of the Fraternity of Shadows. While keeping the facade of a gentle professor loved by his students, Viktor is one of the most creative of all the Richemulot cell members of the Fraternity. His philosophical ideas are often weird at first, but often they are the key to solve a problem or debate in the Fraternity.

He is a close friend of Erik van Rijn and worked with him on numerous projects, either for the university or the Fraternity of Shadows. Viktor suspect Erik's attraction to forbidden magic, but hasn't spoken of it to anyone or even to Erik.

## Combat

Viktor avoids physical combat whenever possible. He will instead flee from it, by running or with the aid of a spell.

However, his cold, calculating side makes him a dangerous person to deal with or to provoke. He will search for revenge if the cause is worth it. Then he will return stealthily, armed with a deadly combination of spells and poison, to assassinate the one causing him trouble, with the minimum physical risk for him.

## Current sketch

His research for the Fraternity of Shadows takes most of his free time spent outside the fishing ponds. Unmarried, but having a secret affair with a married women that teaches at the University, he lives on the University grounds in a small apartment on the second floor of the University private club, his favorite hang out place.

For his research, he might hire adventurers to undertake a specific task such a physical test in ether while on the Sea of Sorrow, recovery of a document, etc. He give false reasons for these tasks, for example often offering the reason that the desired article is needed for its philosophical or scholarly value .

His current fields of studies include the following topics:

- ◆ How could drugs or potions increase the user's awareness and augment the quality of perception of the Demiplane of Dread and of the Plane of Shadows ? A rare drug made out of the brain of the monstrous cozsca is known to heighten awareness ...
- ◆ Viktor think the key to understanding the Demiplane of Dread mechanics is through studying the Plane of Shadows. He hold two principles to back this hypothesis: First, the Plane of Shadows is a highly morphic plane, often changing in ways similar to the



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changes in the Demiplane of Dread that sometimes occur; second, a large part of the illusion matter so dear to the Fraternity is drawn from the Ethereal plane, but also from the plane of Shadows. He plans deep testing of spells with a shadow component, like shades, shadow creations and similar spells to better understand the magic components active in those spells.

- ◆ Another topic raised by his interest of the plane of shadow: Viktor suspects that all colors are unnecessary distractions for the mind and if one could see the universe as it truly is, all would be either black, white or shades of grey, i.e. the true colors of the shadow universe. Because of that, Viktor often wear dark tinted glasses, so his vision is the closest possible to monochromatic gray .

## Gabrek Krakul

### Brother of the Fraternity of Shadows

**Male human, Rgr4/Wiz9/FoS 5; ECL: 15; CR 13; Medium-size Humanoid (human); HD 4d10 + 9d4 + 5d4 + 36; hp 82; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft; AC 13 (+1 Dex, Ring of Protection +2); Melee +12/+7 (Rapier or Delusion 1d6+1, Crit 19-20/x2); SA Rapier of Delusion, spells; SQ Favored Enemy (Wolves), slippery mind; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +14; Str 13, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 15, Wis 16, Cha 14.**

*Skills and Feats:* Alchemy +10, Animal Empathy +7, Concentration +9, Craft (forester) +8, Handle Animal +6, Intuit Direction (Vorostokov only) +8, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (nature) +6, Knowledge (Ravenloft) +15, Knowledge (werebeasts) +8, Listen +12, Profession +10, Scry +8, Spellcraft +10, Spot +9, Wilderness Lore (Vorostokov only) +6, Alertness, Combat Casting, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (Illusion), Spell Mastery

(Phantasmal Killer, Shadow Conjunction), Spell Penetration, Track, Weapon Focus (rapier).

Signature Items: Rapier of Delusion, Sigil Ring, velvet and silk-lined money purse (containing roughly 100gp at all times), walking cane, pocket watch.

#### *Spells (4/4/4/3/2/1)*

*Ranger:* Alarm, Delay Poison, Entangle, Read Magic, Resist Elements, Summon Nature's Ally I.

*Wizard:* Arcane Mark, Dancing Lights, Detect Magic, Ghost Sound, Prestidigitation, Read Magic, Cause fear, Change Self, Color Spray, Magic Missile, Silent Image, Summon Monster I, Ventriloquism, Blur, Continual Flame, Dark Vision, Hypnotic Pattern, Invisibility, Leomund's Trap, Minor Image, Mirror Image, Scare, Summon Monster II, Displacement, Flame Arrow, Hold Person, Illusionary Script, Invisibility Sphere, Major Image, Summon Monster III, Evard's Black Tentacles, Hallucinatory Terrain, Ice Storm, Illusionary Wall, Improved Invisibility, Phantasmal Killer, Rainbow Pattern, Shadow Conjunction, Stoneskin, Summon Monster IV, Cloud Kill, False Vision, Greater Shadow Conjunction, Passwall, Permanency, Persistent Image, Seeming, Shadow Evocation.

Gabrek has an unkept look about him, inherited from his Voros background an upbringing; he sports his thick beard and mustache with pride. It mixes badly with the style of dress he has adopted in Richemulot, donning the fashions that are found acceptable and tries to keep him self moving with the times. His beard and mustaches are never shaven though, that is the only part of himself he insists on remaining the same. Even when he changes his appearance through illusions his appearance still sports and mustache and beard in some form or other.

The rest of his attire is well kept and smartly presented, holding him self up tall and straight at an imposing height of over six feet and barrel-chested. His voice is deep, but seems heartfelt and his laughter is more of a roar when heard. He tends to be quiet most of the time,

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listening to whatever is around him and concocting new schemes.

## Past

Gabrek was born in Vorostokov about ten years before the Dark Powers claimed it. When Gregor Zolnik recruited his boyarksy, Gabrek was becoming a fine hunter, but was claimed to young to join the boyar's ranks. His father was approached and he refused adamantly, his refusal earning him a death at the claws and teeth of the angered Gregor and his followers. From that pint on, Gabrek promised to avenge his father's murder and lift the terror of the Loup du Noir from the land.

Gabrek trained as a ranger, though his hopes of becoming a proud father and hunter were shattered when he was enlisted to learn to read at the hands of an old hermit that listed a day's travel from Novayalensk, Gabrek's village. The hermit taught Gabrek many things, among them the basis of a wizard's art. When Gabrek showed what he had learned to others, they grew to fear him, or more so, his powers. Now alienated from his Village, Gabrek returned to the forest to further his studies. The hermit was a bitter old man, hoping to use Gabrek as his tool against Novayalensk, when the young mage learned of this plan, he cut the hermit's throat as he slept, took what he could and burned the cabin to the ground. As Gabrek grew older, his longing for greater power and hatred for the boyar began to twist and soon Gabrek found himself believing he was above others because of his power and intellect. Testing his prowess, he mercilessly slew a patrol of boyarsky, attracting the attention of Gregor Zolnik. When the ranger cum wizard fled for his life, he stumbled upon a mistway and found himself in Richemulot and soon made some dark, dangerous acquaintances.

## Present

Gabrek sees those around him, including his colleagues as a means of paving his future. Though he appears content as he is today, his often-silent presence causes him to miss his say

on many occasions, but his closest colleagues tend to know what he thinks of an idea or situation at hand. At least they believe they do. Gabrek couldn't really care for the Fraternity if it wasn't funding his works and many secret projects, most of which the Fraternity isn't, that aware of, mostly knowing what is basically required to submit for funding from the society.

Gabrek wishes to see Vorostokov again in his lifetime, once he is finished with the society. He will return to his homeland and rid it of the cruel boyar, taking his place as a leader to his people and lead them into a more prosperous time, so long as he receives the respect he deserves. Though his wishes for his people were once noble, his mind and soul have become tainted with evil over time. The machinations of the Fraternity have only aided this harboring passion for power that lay within him in abundance.

What Gabrek is unaware of is where Vorostokov is in relation to his current placing in the world. He has never found a map leading it to, but some rumors of mistways similar to that he arrived in is said to lead into his homeland. His hated enemy, The Black Wolf is beyond the grasp of his vengeance even now, but he still promises that he will avenge his father's murder though the longer it takes, the more spectacular he wants the boyar's death to be. One of his latest plans involves magic that will destroy all within a mile of the boyar's stockade, taking the innocents of Vorostokov village with him. Gabrek however, is long past caring for a few casualties for the right cause.

Gabrek is also unaware that he is still under the scrutiny of the senior members of the society as his evaluation period continues. It appears that he is growing into a fine member of the fraternity given that his life has not ended yet.

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## Combat

Gabrek favors to keep his opponents at bay using others as a wall and is not afraid to harm them if it will dispose of his enemies. If pressed into melee, he can defend himself with his Rapier of Delusion.

**Spells:** If Gabrek can, he only uses illusions (though he is not an illusionist himself). However, he does tend to memorize spells from some other schools in case they are needed. The only exception to this is his spells from being a ranger. If things go awry during battle, he has a tendency of turning invisible to escape conflict.

**Rapier of Delusion:** This enchanted weapon was forged by the Fraternity and enchanted by Gabrek himself. When the weapon strikes in melee, in addition to any damage it inflicts, there is a chance (15% + 1 per point of damage) that the enemy struck will become confused (as the spell) until the end of the next round. The weapon may also be used to cast a Color Spray spell as a 5th level wizard once per day. The weapon holds no other enchantments.

## Kristoff Lutemmi

### Adventurer

#### Brother of the Fraternity of Shadows

**Male Human Wiz5/FoS5:** CR 10, Medium-size humanoid; HD 10d4 (32 hp); Init +1 (Dex); AC 11 (+1 Dex); Atk. +2 melee; SQ Lore of the Fraternity, Deeper Darkness, Slippery Mind, Aura of the Winterboone; AL NE; Saves Fort +1, Ref +1, Wil +3; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 17, Wis 14, Cha 18.

**Skills and Feats:** Alchemy +12, Appraise +7, Concentration +11, Craft (carving) +7, Diplomacy +3, Gather Information +6, Hide +8, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Knowledge (Ravenloft) +16, Listen +6, Move Silently +8, Perform +5, Scry +9, Spellcraft +12; Craft Wondrous Item, Iron Will, Maximize Spell, Scribe Scroll, Still Spell.

*Signature Possessions:* Fraternity Sigil Ring, Winterboone Band

## Appearance

Honored Brother Kristoff Lutemmi is a 29-year old Fraternity member with a clean-shaven face, chestnut-brown hair and dark green eyes. He wears a black wizard robe with silver trim. Since his initiation into the Fraternity he has never been known to speak, letting his actions dictate his whims and desires. There are some, however, who claim that the shadows themselves speak for Kristoff.

## Background

Kristoff is one of the last remaining descendants of the cursed Winterboone clan, a noble family rooted in Neblus, the tombstone city of northern Darkon. The curse's history remains hidden, but the aftereffects are potent: the Winterboones can stay in human form only during the winter; the rest of the year they remain as cold statues. Thus Kristoff was born and grew only in sleet and snow, a handsome young boy with an eye which sought to go beyond the white world the rest could only dream of.

Like many others in his family, Kristoff sought to lift the curse--and what better way to remove it, he thought, than by studying the arcane lore which brought the pall over them in the first place. In the sixteenth winter of his life, he commenced his studies on ancient magicks and forgotten knowledge, taking in as much lore as he could before the snows melted and the curse turned him and his family once more into stone until the next winter arrived.

Kristoff's quest into the hidden arts made him want to thirst for more of this ancient knowledge, but his nature prevented him from doing so. In the third winter of Kristoff's study, a direct descendant of the Winterboones returned triumphantly to Neblus. Fritz Winterboone, a warrior of exceptional virtue, held in his hand the Winterdamsel, a long lost heirloom sword which rendered him immune to the lithic curse.

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At that point, Kristoff wanted nothing more than to take the sword as his own, to watch the changing of the seasons, to prolong his existence not just for one season a year. Obsessed with the Winterdamsel, Kristoff searched for something that could match its lifegiving power, to no avail.

It was then that to him, it seemed that the shadows spoke. As he maddeningly peered through old books on forbidden magicks, three figures clothed in black emerged from the darkness and spoke to him in dry, whispery voices. They claimed to be of a Fraternity which sought knowledge similar to what Kristoff desired, and they could give him what he wanted, provided he share his knowledge with them. Desperate for a life beyond the snows, far from the nothingness of being a statue, he without a doubt accepted the terms.

It was the last day of winter when Kristoff sat in a magical circle, surrounded by the Esteemed as they chanted their spells and painfully released him from the clutches of the Winterboone curse. As the first rays of the spring sun poured over him, Kristoff knew he was now forever in the Fraternity's will, to aid them in their cause for arcane perfection.

## Current Sketch

Kristoff Lutemmi has turned out to be an exceptional member of the Fraternity of Shadows. Free from the curse that renders his family stone, he now travels the Core in search of forgotten lore and ancient artifacts. He has completely disregarded the family curse as a sign of weakness, and an inability of the Winterboones to rise above their predicaments. For all the success he has gained, however, his lips and his heart are forever as cold and silent as the stony curse he no longer bears.

Kristoff, however, fights a nemesis. Fritz Winterboone has at present become a member of Midway Haven, and thus fights for the cause of good. This virtuous man wants nothing more than for Kristoff to pay for his deceptions, while Kristoff wants nothing less

than ownership of Winterdamsel. On winter nights in Barovia, it is said that a shadowy figure could be seen standing on a hill opposite the Haven by Lake Zarovich, seemingly defying its cause and the Winterboone who resides in it.

## Combat

As a member of the Fraternity of Shadows, Kristoff Lutemmi has the vicious abilities and skills granted by that dark Order.

**Lore of the Fraternity (Su):** Kristoff automatically gains 1 rank in Knowledge: Ravenloft and 1 rank in any one other Knowledge skill of his choice for every level he attains in the Fraternity.

**Deeper Darkness (Sp):** Kristoff's Fraternity Sigil Ring allows him to cast the spell deeper darkness three times per day as a free action. This ring will not function for any other person, and is the symbol of his membership in the Fraternity.

**Slippery Mind (Ex):** Kristoff has reached a degree of mental conditioning which allows him the chance to avoid the mental enthrallment of others. This is the same as the rogue ability Slippery Mind.

**Aura of the Winterboone (Su):** Kristoff's wristband, inscribed with the clan's coat-of-arms, allows him to endure elements (cold only) as the spell of the same name, with a duration of one round per level.

## Erik van Rijn

**Professor of Modern Languages and Anthropology, University of Richemulot**  
**Brother of the Fraternity of Shadows**

**CR 14, Medium human Trans8/FoS6** HD 14d4 -14 hp 28 Initiative +3 Spd 20 ft; AC 12 (-1 Dex, +3 with necklace of protection +3); Atk (+5/+0) 1d4-2; Face/Reach 5'x5'; SA spells SQ slippery mind AL NE SV Fort +2 Ref +3 Will +14 Str 7 Con 9 Dex 8 Int 24 Wis 16 Cha 8

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*Skills and Feats:* Alchemy +24, Concentration +20, Forgery +14, Knowledge (Arcana) +24, Knowledge (Ravenloft) +24, Knowledge (undead) +14, Knowledge (outsiders) +14, Knowledge (shapeshifters) +14, Spellcraft +24, Scry +16; Scribe Scroll, Brew Potion, Forge Ring, Improved Initiative, Spell Focus (Transmutation), Extend Spell, Spell Mastery (detect magic, invisibility, teleport) Quicken Spell, Silent Spell, Still Spell.

*Languages:* Mordentish, Balok, Darkonese, Draconic, Falkovnian, Vaasi, Kartakan, Old Kartakan, Lamordian, Valachani, Sithican, Tepestani, Rajian, Nosan, Paridonish, Dutch, Latin.

*Possessions:* Cane of lights, ring of regeneration, necklace of protection +3

*Spells:* 4+1/6+1/6+1/5+1/5+1/4+1/4+1/2+1  
Specialized school: Transmutation. Forbidden School: Conjuration.

*Spells:*

0th level: All non-conjuration.

1st level: Shield, Comprehend Languages, Detect Undead, Identify, Charm Person, Sleep, Magic Missile, Change Self, Silent Image, Ventriloquism, Chill Touch, Ray of Enfeeblement, all Transmutation spells.

2nd level: Arcane Lock, Obscure Object, Resist Elements, Detect Thoughts, Locate Object, See Invisibility, Darkness, Daylight, Shatter, Invisibility, Minor Image, Ghoul Touch, Scare, Spectral Hand, Alter Self, Knock, Levitate, Pyrotechnics, Rope Trick.

3rd level: Dispel Magic, Clairaudience/Clairvoyance, Tongues, Hold Person, Suggestion, Fireball, Lightning Bolt, Major Image, Halt Undead, Vampiric Touch, Blink, Fly, Gaseous Form, Haste, Shrink Item, Slow, Water Breathing.

4th level: Fire Trap, Minor Globe of Invulnerability, Remove Curse, Stoneskin, Arcane Eye, Detect Scrying, Locate Creature, Scrying, Charm Monster, Confusion, Fire Shield, Ice Storm, Shout, Improved Invisibility, Phantasmal Killer, Enervation, Fear, Bestow

Curse, Dimension Door, Polymorph Other, Polymorph Self, Rary's Mnemonic Enhancer.

5th level: Prying Eyes, Dominate Person, Feeblemind, Hold Monster, Mind Fog, Cone of Cold, Wall of Force, Persistent Image, Animate Dead, Magic Jar, Fabricate, Passwall, Stone Shape, Telekinesis, Teleport, Permenancy.

6th level: Antimagic Field, Globe of Invulnerability, Guards and Wards, Repulsion, Analyze Dweomer, Legend Lore, True Seeing, Contingency, Permanent Image, Programmed Image, Project Image, Circle of Death, Control Weather, Distintegrate, Eyebite, Flesh/Stone to Stone/Flesh, Mordenkainen's Lucubration.

7th level: Spell Turning, Greater Scrying, Vision, Insanity, Prismatic Spray, Shadow Walk, Control Undead, Finger of Death, Ethereal Jaunt, Reverse Gravity, Statue, Teleport Without Error, Vanish, Limited Wish.

## Background

Erik van Rijn was born in the city of Amsterdam in Gothic Earth, the son of a well-to-do merchant who intended, at first, that his son follow him into the family business. His plans changed, however, when he discovered his six-year-old son reading the family Bible in Latin. He arranged for private tutors to instruct his son, and Erik's academic potential soon became fully apparent. When he left home at the age of seventeen to attend university in Gottingen he was already fluent in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and a handful of modern languages, and he quickly became a star pupil. However, his eagerness to learn soon took a dark turning. While at the university he also began to read the works of such famous magicians as Paracelsus and Nicolas Flamel, and soon he became an eager devotee of alchemy and the occult. Led, perhaps, by the Red Death, he eventually encountered magical formulas of real potency--discoveries which whetted his appetite for power at any cost.

Like other alchemists, van Rijn's ultimate goal was to create the philosopher's stone--the fabled artifact which would grant both the ability to transform base metals into gold and the secret of eternal youth. His desperate search for funds and ingredients led him to first to



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embezzlement, then to grave-robbing, and his search for occult knowledge brought him into contact with forces which encouraged him in his downward spiral. At last, he believed he had found the secret of the philosopher's stone--but to create it he would need the life-blood of a human being.

For a time van Rijn struggled with himself over this final step, but the enticement of infinite wealth and eternal youth was too strong; he added kidnapping and murder to the list of his crimes, luring a beggar with the promise of coin, sedating him with an alchemical concoction, and draining him of his life's blood. As van Rijn worked over his alchemical apparatus that night, the end of his long struggle for the philosopher's stone in sight, he found himself growing dizzy and light-headed; the room seemed filled with fumes from the alembics and beakers, filling his vision and clouding the room. He struggled to continue, but he felt consciousness slip away from him...

When he came to himself, van Rijn found himself in an abandoned house on the outskirts of a large city. To his astonishment and terror, he had no idea where he was, and the language of the natives was completely unfamiliar. He was able to support himself by scavenging from the many abandoned homes and businesses of the city while he put his linguistic talents to use; soon he found himself fluent enough to understand that he found himself in Ste. Ronges in Richemulot--a city and country he had never heard of, nor seen on a map. He soon learned that he found himself in what was literally a new world, and he became obsessed by the desire to explain what had happened to him and the world around him. At first he plunged himself into study at the University of Richemulot, but even the academic resources of that center of learning failed to address his questions. Frustrated, he began to wander the Core in search of answers to his questions about the physics and metaphysics of the Demiplane. It was in the course of these wanderings that he met and became an associate of the famous (or infamous) bard of Kartakass, Harkon Lukas, but after suffering a serious

mauling at the hands of Master Ulathar, a psionic lich, while adventuring with Lukas he was forced to leave the active life of an adventurer and retired to an academic position at the University of Richemulot, where his knack for learning languages and his extensive travels won him a position as a professor of anthropology and modern languages.

Here he made the acquaintance of Viktor Hazan, then a recent initiate into the Fraternity of Shadows. The two became friends--at least, insofar as both are capable of friendship--and Hazan soon determined that van Rijn would be an ideal member of the Fraternity. Initially, van Rijn progressed in the Fraternity by leaps and bounds, but soon he found his progress in the Fraternity blocked by questions of Fraternity politics and philosophy. He discovered that his favored branches of study--anthropology, languages, transmutation and alchemy--were considered lowbrow and overly concerned with the material by the more senior members of the Fraternity, who favored the study of illusion, philosophy, and mathematics--the most mental and ideal of the magical and scholarly branches of study.

At first, van Rijn hoped to overcome this prejudice by excellence and diligence in serving the Fraternity, but as time has gone on he has begun to grow embittered by his perceived lack of status in the Fraternity. In addition, he feels that his time may be growing short as his health fails. He failed to achieve the philosopher's stone, and he has failed to reach the highest level of the Fraternity and gain immortality in that way--but he is resolved to cheat Death in any way he can, and if the Fraternity will not offer him scope for his talents, backing for his studies, and the promise of eternal life, he may be forced to turn to other sources. Already he has turned to the study of necromancy, and none can say to what lengths he will go to achieve his goals...

## Current Sketch

Erik van Rijn is now in his late fifties; his face is domingated by piercing gray eyes, long, lank gray-brown hair, and a similarly

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unkempt beard. He has a heavy paunch but is otherwise quite thin; his hands--by far his best feature--are long-fingered, well-kept and elegant. He wears the sigil ring of the Fraternity (two intertwined silver asps with an onyx in their mouths) on the middle finger of his left hand and a plain gold band (a ring of regeneration) on the ring finger of his right hand; he usually dresses in black and red, wearing the jacket and trousers of a gentleman of Richemulot society. He wears a ruby pendant necklace of protection +3 under his shirt.

Van Rijn is extremely intelligent and extremely arrogant; he is usually quiet and distant, but he is bitterly sarcastic when provoked. He holds an endowed chair which frees him from most academic duties; he gives a lecture on "cultures and peoples of the Core" once a week and tutors the few students willing to deal with his terrible tongue-lashings in modern languages, philosophy, alchemy or whatever else they find of interest in the mornings. Nearly all the students and faculty of the University fear and dislike van Rijn and not a few hate him, but he is generally considered a genius--albeit an extremely unpleasant one.

Van Rijn makes his home a few miles outside Ste. Ronges in a crumbling chateau known as the Chateau d'Is, where he lives with two servants. Those members of the Fraternity of Shadows who live in Richemulot often use his home as a convenient meeting place.

## Combat

Van Rijn has no strength for nor interest in combat; if he cannot avoid it by using enchantment spells, he will attempt to evade it, if his opponent appears strong, or to end it quickly by using crushing force if his opponent appears weak enough to land a killing blow immediately.

In addition to his protective magical devices--the ring and necklace previously mentioned--van Rijn always carries a cane with a worn silver head and iron ferrule. This is actually a powerful magic item, capable of casting the following spells: At will: light; 3/day: color spray or daylight; 1/day: searing light or fireball; 1/month: prismatic spray or sunburst. All spells are cast as a 12th level sorcerer, save DC 14 + spell level when applicable.



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## NEW RULES FOR THE REDEEMED

AND BY THIS HOLY LIGHT THOU SHALT BE SAVED

By: Dion Fernandez  
(of Midway Haven)

"If the Legions of the Night can be brought out of the Darkness, then that is the role they have chosen in the Grand Scheme, and they shall stand in Your Legions no more."

**The Mists of Death were silent.  
-The Second Book of Ezra  
xxviii-xxix.**

In Ravenloft, things are  
never what they seem;  
Evil can conceal itself  
in the guise of Good. Why  
couldn't  
it be the other way  
around?

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Ravenloft accessory *Champions of the Mists* details the Redeemed, a player kit for characters who seek to rectify the evils they have done in their previous lives, and now dedicate themselves to the cause of good. This article adopts a few new rules to make gaming in Ravenloft a little more interesting.

### Unusual Characters

In the Land of Mists, the creatures of the night have always been synonymous with evil. Consider the assassin who hides in the shadows, patiently waiting at bay for his next kill. Or the werewolf, the beast that hunts simply for the sadistic pleasures of doing so. Or even the vampire, that which drinks the blood of the living to sustain its malevolent existence. Players or even DMs would probably shudder at the idea of these epitomes of evil becoming legions of good, prying their way into holy light.

But anything is possible in the Demiplane of Dread. As many sacrifice a large portion of themselves to become legions of darkness, so too do the Redeemed shed much of their evil taint for a greater cause. To some, this would seem like a symbolic purging; to others, a punishment for past mistakes. Nevertheless, no matter how evil a mortal entity could be, the benevolent legions of goodness are always there, hiding like the sliver of Hope in Pandora's Box, ready to claim another champion for their cause.

### The Path of Redemption

Listed below are three main categories for the Redeemed: repentant humanoid characters, undead given a new lease on life, and outsiders sundered from most of their qualities. As a basic rule, if the DM uses the Terror Tracks option, the Redeemed character can keep only one Track, with its corresponding benefit and drawback. If the Terror Tracks are not used, then the Redeemed character can only use one special attack or quality related to its "evil past," and a



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corresponding penalty or hindrance must be added as an offset. Take the vampire, guilty of his dark past, somehow given back his living humanity to right his wrongs. While he still retains the power to call upon the Creatures of the Night, he can never step foot in daylight again. Such is a powerful reminder of his new calling for the better good, and to stay away from the clutches of evil.

## The Repentant: A Dark Past Abandoned

"Only the gods can see  
into a man's soul."  
--"Shadowborn"

Whether by guilt, remorse or punishment, a person who abandons his evil past to further the cause of good is a powerful force to be reckoned with. When living humanoids become Redeemed, they lose one experience level and all benefits granted thereof. Listed below are a few example ideas for creating Redeemed humanoid characters in Ravenloft.

## The Falkovnian Talon

An elite agent of Vlad Drakov may find guilt in the extreme militaristic oppression of his people: the sight of young children torn from their parents, of innocents impaled and wailing in agony as they die a slow, painful death, would most likely turn him away from Falkovnia's darklord.

The Redeemed Talon becomes a Fighter one level lower, and loses all benefits granted thereof. Thus, a 10<sup>th</sup> level Falkovnian Talon who decides he has had enough and decides to quit the ranks becomes a Fighter of 9<sup>th</sup> level, and loses one of his feats as granted. He however gains the abilities listed below, depending on his level. He also gets to keep his weapons and armor, but he had better beware: Drakov's agents would never suffer a traitor to live.

**Talon Bounty:** At 1<sup>st</sup> level, the Redeemed Talon gets a bounty placed upon his head. He has a 3% chance every three days of encountering Drakov's minions. This chance increases by 1% per level. This is an extraordinary ability.

**Courage:** At 5<sup>th</sup> level, the Redeemed Talon gains the Courage feat for free. If he already has this feat, he gets an additional +3 bonus on all Fear saves from this point on.

**Traitor's Stride:** At 7<sup>th</sup> level, the Redeemed Talon becomes a master of stealth in his own land. He gets a +4 skill bonus on his Hide, Listen and Move Silently skill checks whenever he enters Falkovnia. This is an extraordinary ability.

## Allian Krevuciek

**Male Redeemed, Ftr9: Medium-sized humanoid (human);** HD 9d10; hp 74; Init +6 (+2 Dexterity, +4 Improved Initiative); AC 16 (+2 Dexterity, +4 scale mail); Atk. +9/+4 melee; SQ Talon Bounty, Traitor's Stride; AI CG; Save Fort +6, Ref +3, Wil +3; Str 18, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 18.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +10, Craft (bladesmith) +8, Handle Animal +6, Heal +7, Hide +8, Jump +11, Knowledge (Falkovnia) +6, Knowledge (nature) +8, Listen +6, Move Silently +5, Ride +7, Swim +6, Use Rope +4; Ambidexterity, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Courage, Improved Critical (long sword), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Track.

Allian Krevuciek is an example of a Redeemed Falkovnian Talon. Before he became a champion of good, he was a 10<sup>th</sup> level minion of Vlad Drakov. Only when his whole family was rounded up and sent to Draccipetri to be impaled did Allian flee Falkovnia and vest himself free from the ranks of the Talons. Because of this traitorous act (in the eyes of the Talons), he has lived in hiding somewhere in Lamordia secretly assisting fellow mercenaries for the cause of good.

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## The Priest of the Devourer

In the dying land of G'Henna, the parched earth and the starving masses could be more than reason enough for an acolyte of the Devourer to doubt his faith.

The Redeemed Priest of the Devourer becomes a Cleric or a Priest of the Provider one level lower, and loses all benefits granted thereof. Thus, a 4<sup>th</sup> level acolyte of Zhakata who sheds his dark cloak and converts to the Provider's bounty becomes merely a Cleric of 3<sup>rd</sup> level, and loses one feat plus the spells granted by that level. He however gains the abilities listed below, depending on his level. The mind works in mysterious ways: memories of the cleric's former life have the possibility of resurfacing at the least expected moment.

**Devouring Dreams:** At 2<sup>nd</sup> level, the Redeemed Priest of the Devourer experiences horrifying nightmares of his former evil life. Every 30 days, there is a 2% chance per level of being "visited" by Zhakata the Devourer. This terrifying nightmare lasts for 1d6 rounds, after which he suddenly wakes up in a cold sweat. He must then immediately make a Horror save. This is a supernatural ability.

**Jaded:** At 7<sup>th</sup> level, the Redeemed Priest of the Devourer gains the Jaded feat for free. If he already has this feat, he gets an additional +3 bonus on all Horror saves from this point on.

**Heretic's Will:** At 8<sup>th</sup> level, the Redeemed Priest of the Devourer gains a will to resist the call of evil in his land. He gains an immunity to all mind-affecting attacks and abilities whenever he enters G'Henna. This is an extraordinary ability.

## Regiena Lugdrevich

**Female Redeemed, Clr 5: Medium-sized humanoid (human);** HD 5d6; hp 24; Init +4 (+4 Dexterity); AC 14 (+4 Dexterity); Atk. +3 melee; SA Turn Undead; SQ Devouring Dreams; AL LG; Save Fort +4, Ref +1, Wil +4; Str 13, Dex 19, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 18, Cha 14.

*Skills and Feats:* Concentration +6, Craft (cook) +4, Diplomacy +6, Gather Information +4, Perform (preach) +5, Heal +5, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (Faiths of Zhakata) +8, Scry +5, Spellcraft +5; Dodge, Extra Turning, Mobility, Power Attack.

*Cleric Spells per day:* (5/5/4/3). Base DC=11+spell level. Deity: Zhakata the Provider. Domains: Good (Cast good spells at +1 caster level), Healing (Cast healing spells at +1 caster level).

Born and raised as the Devourer's acolyte in Zhukar, Regiena, a 6<sup>th</sup> level priest, was finally sickened by the horrible poverty that surrounded her. After divesting herself of her robes and renouncing her evil faith, she was immediately sent beneath the Temple and tortured. Only when priests of the Provider sneaked into the chambers and freed Regiena of her shackles did she find a new and highly devotional life as a cleric. She now wanders G'Henna secretly, as a 5<sup>th</sup> level cleric, converting individuals into the benevolent faith of the Provider. Sometimes, however, scenes of her past torture wrack her mind. Images of the Devourer occasionally taunt Regiena and try to lure her back into its grip.

## The Undead: Second Chances

"I believe that this land is so dark, that nothing completely good can dwell here."

--"Vampire of the Mists"

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

Picture this: a vile creature of enfleshed death, moved to pity by the sight of innocents she has destroyed. What if an undead creature somehow saw herself in the death gaze of her child victim, and felt guilt for the first time in her unlife? What if, after a few more years, she decides to end it all by stepping into consecrated ground and vows never to feed and kill in her way again? And what if, a weak but benevolent power decides to give her a second chance by resurrecting her and returning her soul?

In a land of pure darkness, the powers of good will always find a way to further their cause, by any unusual means possible. Even if this would entail giving the dead a chance to renew their lives, in a realm of pure terror, then let it be so.

Dungeon Masters have an option of accepting once-undead redeemed characters into their campaign. "Once-undead" means that, as a basic rule, redeemed undead have been granted a new lease on life ("given a soul") to right their wrongs. When the undead are given back their lives, they lose half their levels gained in their undeath. They obviously lose their "undead" traits. As an option these characters may or may not gain the "Cold One" feat for free when they reach 6<sup>th</sup> level. Unless specified, all spell-like powers, special attacks and qualities are lost except for two: one that acts as a benefit, and one that acts as a hindrance. Listed below are a few example ideas for creating Redeemed former-undead characters in Ravenloft.

## The Vampire\*

\*Eminent and Patriarch vampires are too corrupted by evil, and thus cannot be Redeemed.

### Rojello Corduva

**Male Redeemed Rgr5: Medium-sized humanoid (elf);** HD 5d10; hp 40; Init +3 (+3 Dexterity); AC 15 (+3 Dexterity, +2 leather armor); Atk. +5 melee; SQ Damage Reduction 10/oakwood, Black Thumb; AL CG; Save Fort

+4, Ref +1, Wil +1; Str 15, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 18, Wis 16, Cha 14.

*Skills and Feats:* Animal Empathy +8, Climb +7, Concentration +5, Craft +4, Handle Animal +8, Heal +5, Hide +7, Intuit Direction +5, Jump +6, Knowledge (nature) +8, Listen +5, Move Silently +6, Ride +7, Search +5, Spot +7, Swim +7, Use Rope +4, Wilderness Lore +8; Far Shot, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Track.

*Favored Enemies:* undead humanoids, evil fey.

*Ranger spells per day:* (0). Base DC=12+spell level.

Rojello was once a 10<sup>th</sup> level vampiric ranger in the wilds of Richemulot, preying on the occasional passerby who intruded into his cavern stronghold. His twist of fate came one day when, while stalking a nearby druids' grove, he was astonished to find its inhabitants all gruesomely murdered.

All except one: a nine-month old child. Partaking a child of its warm blood was somehow in that moment not within his sensibilities, so he grabbed the child and took it into his cavern. One night, however, he sensed the druids' vampiric murderers at his doorstep, ready to strike at the child that was left behind. Rojello fought the creatures, emerging victorious but at the cost of being drained of all his essences. With the remaining strength he had in him, he brought the child to a holy dolmen where he prayed to any deity that could hear him to end his and the child's miseries. Rojello felt his senses numbing as he lay at the portal of true death.

He awoke at sunrise, and was astounded to feel warm, living blood course through his veins. The child in his care was well, smiling at Rojello and his new chance on life. Though his touch was still death to plant life, he knew with greater resolve that he had a vow to keep: to raise this child and avenge the death of his family by fending off the evils that perpetually lurk at bay.

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

**Damage Reduction (Su):** Rojello has damage reduction 10/oakwood.

**Black Thumb (Su):** Although Rojello has regained his mortality, any plant he touches with his bare skin must still make a successful Fortitude save (DC 12) or suffer 1d4 points of damage each minute for a duration of 10 minutes. Once started, this withering process can be halted mid-course only by destroying Rojello. He can feel the agony of the plants he touches, and thus tries to avoid doing so.

## The Zombie Lord

### Sophia Loebur

**Female Redeemed, Sor7: Medium-sized humanoid (human);** HD 7d4; hp 23; Init +5 (+4 Improved Initiative, +1 Ring of Protection); Atk. +3 melee; Turn Zombies; SQ Nightmares; AL NG; Save Fort +2, Ref +2, Wil +5; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 18, Wis 16, Cha 15.

*Skills and Feats:* Alchemy +9, Balance +5, Concentration +10, Craft (preserving) +5, Hide +5, Intuit Direction +6, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (Western Sea) +7, Profession (anatomist) +6, Scry +8, Spellcraft +9, Wilderness Lore +5; Cold One, Maximize Spell, Scribe Scroll, Still Spell, Silent Spell, Track.

*Familiar:* Hedgehog (+2 bonus on Hide skill checks).

*Sorcerer spells per day:* (6/6/6/4).

As a 14<sup>th</sup> level undead sorceress, Sophia was ruthless. Off the coast of the Western Sea, on an islet called Hamfax Rock, she controlled an army of zombies that terrorized the coastal villages of Mordent and Dementlieu.

One day, however, after what seemed to be a fruitful harvest of more minions under her command, she gasped in horror to see her loved ones staring back at her-- one with the undead. Unable to bear the fact that her aged mother, father and siblings would forever be under her whim, she stood on the tip of Hamfax Rock and

leapt to her final death beneath the waves. It was her hope that the salt of the ocean and the creatures of the deep would consume her essences.

Sometime later, however, she awoke and found herself under a small chapel dedicated to Our Guardian of the Mists, surrounded by concerned elderly folk. They had found her body on the shores one morning, and finding out that she was "still alive," they brought her to the nearest anchorites for healing. Secretly, Sophia told her healers of her dark past, and vowed that she would destroy her vile army as payment for their kindness. With new resolve she and a few others returned to Hamfax Rock and, with a heavy heart, slew all the undead terrors within.

Hamfax Rock still brings fear to many who live by the Sea of Sorrows, although the evil that once wafted from this jagged islet has been replaced by a brooding agent of good. Silently, Sophia Loebur still goes on with her arcane research, ready to help other champions of good who visit her rocky haven.

**Turn Zombies (Su):** Sophia can turn zombies as a cleric of her level turns undead.

**Nightmares (Su):** Once every 1d10 days, unless she makes a Will save (DC 12), Sophia suffers the effects of a *nightmare* spell, wherein images of her family torment her in her dreams.

## The Sundered: A Twist of Nature

"I'm human enough. My hands are getting callused. I have to eat, to sleep..."

--"Dance of the Dead"

By their very nature, the infernal denizens are nothing but pure evil. Throughout the worlds that circle the burning suns of the Prime Material Plane, these devils, demons and

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

horrors wage an ageless Blood War for supremacy of what mortals call Hell. Only the most powerful of all magic or divine intervention can ever pull these beings on the side of light.

In the feared Demiplane of Dread, however, where the infernal ilk are few and far between, there is one way of winning the evil into good: turning them mortal against their will.

Nothing short of a *wish* can redeem these outsiders; but if the opportunity presents itself, these beings are sundered from their infernal traits and become one with the common humanoid races known. Like the Redeemed undead, these characters lose their spell-like powers, special attacks and qualities, but get to keep two of their former traits, similar to the effects of a failed Powers check. They retain their ethical alignment: a Chaotic Evil demon sundered from its nature becomes a Chaotic Good Redeemed. They lose three-fourths of their levels gained during their status as outsiders, and most importantly they lose their "outsider" traits. Below is an example idea for creating Redeemed evil outsiders in Ravenloft.

## The Demon

### Vanessa Infestat

**Female Redeemed Rog2: Medium-sized humanoid (human);** HD 2d8; hp 12; Init +5 (+5 Dexterity); AC 17 (+5 Dexterity, +2 leather armor); Atk. +1 melee, longbow +2 ranged; SA Serpent Summoning; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., Evasion, Agoraphobia; AL CG; Save Fort +0, Ref +3, Wil +0; Str 13, Dex 20, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 18.

*Skills & Feats:* Appraise +3, Balance +6, Climb +6, Decipher Script +5, Diplomacy +3, Disable Device +4, Disguise +5, Escape Artist +6, Gather Information +5, Hide +7, Innuendo +3, Intimidate +3, Jump +2, Listen +5, Move Silently +5, Open Lock +4, Perform +3, Pick Pocket +6, Read Lips +4, Search +7, Sense Motive +7, Spot +5, Use Magic Device +4; Alertness, Run, Track.

The village of Saint Agnes the Autumnal in Nova Vaasa is said to harbor a portal to the nether realms; only one person was brave enough to prove this theory correct. In 753, an elemental wizard used arcane lore to summon up a minor demon, a neonatal marilith named Oenexa, in a catacomb beneath St. Agnes.

In the months that followed, St. Agnes' inhabitants became concerned of the growing number of reptilians in their idyllic home, not knowing that an evil walks among them. When Oenexa finally revealed herself, an intrepid group of sorcerers risked their souls to contain her by transubstantiating her nature and turning her into a mortal human being. Oenexa's phylactery was cast back into the nether portal, rendering her powerless and nearly insane.

Despite its stygian secret, St. Agnes the Autumnal was a village of good people. Knowing that Oenexa was completely harmless for the present, they took her in and helped her cope with her new nature as a mortal being. Although no one can control her free-spirited nature, Oenexa, renamed Vanessa, is proof that even the high legions of evil can be turned against themselves.

**Serpent Summoning (Su):** Vanessa can call into control any reptilian animal within 50 feet of her.

**Evasion (Ex):** As a rogue, if exposed to any effect that normally allows Vanessa to attempt a Reflex saving throw for half damage, she takes no damage with a successful saving throw. Evasion can only be used if Vanessa is wearing light armor or no armor.

**Darkvision (Ex):** Vanessa has darkvision of up to 60 feet.

**Agoraphobia (Su):** Vanessa retained this trait as a former denizen of the cramped and shifting realities of the Abyss. Not used to the relative stillness of her new home, she must make a Fear

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save (DC 8) for every hour she stays in wide, open spaces.





## PEOPLES TO MEET IN THE LAND OF MISTS

### A CONTEST OPEN FOR CITIZENS AND VISITORS OF RAVENLOFT

"Some people weave burlap into the fabric of our lives, and some weave gold thread. Both contribute to make the whole picture beautiful and unique."

-- Anonymous

By: The Kargatane board patrons

Compiled by: Joël Paquin

The USS "NPC contest"  
winner and the best  
entries

After asking for contest ideas on the Kargatane Message Board (which was almost a contest all by itself), the USS editors had the pleasure to host a contest on NPC descriptions during the summer of 2002.

What we asked was: "describe a non player character from Ravenloft, in ten sentences or less". Game mechanics were to be excluded of the description. We accepted human or demi-humans only, so no monstrous hybrids were allowed. The prize would be a CD or a book from Amazon.com.

While we did not receive tons of entries, we did have quite interesting ones, and we shall now let you judge this. The USS editors had a vote on usefulness in a campaign and originality. And of course, our own submissions were not in the contest, we just wanted to add a few NPCs we found interesting!

Congratulations to Fabio Santos, winner of the contest. We would also like to thank all participants!

NPC contest winner:

**Professor Benjamin Hanlon, the Scholar of Transposition** (Port Au-Lucine, Dementlieu)

Prof. Benjamin Hanlon is a 52-year old man, born in Mordent, who studied at the Il Aluk School of Medicine and is a renowned Psychiatrist. He now works at an old asylum in Dementlieu. He stands 5'5" foot tall, has gray hair, which he keeps short, and a gray beard. He wears silver glasses that were a gift from his daughter, Emmanuele.

Prof. Hanlon studies a rare disease, which he first observed in one of his patients in the Asylum - a simple, harmless peasant who turned into a murderer and killed his wife and two sons. He was considered insane and committed to the Asylum. During his short stay there, Prof. Hanlon observed that the body of the man started to change: he grew a leathery, gray skin, and his eyes also turned gray; he started eating raw flesh and shout blasphemies. He escaped the Asylum on one stormy night. Convinced that he faced some sort of new disease that affected not only the brain, but also the entire body, Prof. Hanlon set forth to study this new condition, which he called Malatia Demoniae.

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He has seen perhaps another three patients with this pathology in all those years - a terrible organic disease with some sort of psychopathic delirium. He catalogs all that he sees, in hopes of finding a cure.

Prof. Hanlon doesn't know how near the truth he was when he named the disease Mallatia Demoniae, for those patients were not sick, but suffering from transposition by fiends. His only clue to the truth behind this condition is something which he tries to forget, but always remembers when he goes to sleep - the pure, raw, inhuman evil that he saw behind the eyes of his first patient, eyes that belonged but could not belong to another human being. It is perhaps this fear that keeps his work going on, for if he cannot find a cure, he hopes at least to lock those people safely in his Asylum.

*By: Fabio Santos*



## Jorane Amos (Invidia)

The youngest daughter of a well known bakery shop owner in Karina, Jorane Amos is now in her late 20's. She is small, thin and average looking. Her hair is black and her gaze is eagle-like. She often wear black clothes and has a stern expression. She almost never smiles. Her parents are concerned that she isn't married yet and often try to present her potential husbands. While helping her parents at the bakery, and learning magic, Jorane has also been a secret member of the Kargatane network of spies for nearly a decade.

Her local superiors in that organization often use her brilliant mind when planning operations. She enjoys spying on her future victims, learning all she can about them. She is very successful at setting well-crafted traps for the unwary, always playing on the weaknesses she has observed. She is responsible for the death of many opponents, while always moving the attention away from the Kargatane. She often advises on how to maintain a grip on the network of informants, willing or not. With all

those qualities and strength, she is promised a bright future in that secret society.

*By: Joël Paquin*



## Selek Anders

Selek was once a captain serving in Drakov's army and was placed in the invasion force, destined to meet its end when Drakov ordered yet another doomed invasion into Darkon only a few months after Azalin's initial disappearance. Having been forced into his position and questioning his commanders motives as well as orders, Selek faked his death on the battlefield after hearing of the murder of his family as they traveled south, in Richemulot. Having escaped Falkovnia, he now travels as a sword for hire and feels his age catching up with him; Drakov has since heard of Selek's evasion of duties and has placed a high price on his head.

*By: Eddy Brennan*



## Lady Alma di Angellis

Lady Alma di Angellis is a neutral good human priestess of the Eternal Order, living in a small, isolated community somewhere between the Mistlands and the Mountains of Misery. Her church is very small, not one of the grand temples of the Order, and she keeps an unordinary way of guiding the community, using her spells to cure and help people for free and not charging for any other service. She is a devoted follower of the Order's teachings, but she believes people should learn devotion through love and compassion, not fear.

She fiercely fights against any undead she encounters and sometimes helps adventurers who come to her town. Because of her conduct, the locals like and respect her very much and still follow the teachings of the Order, although its has lost a lot of adepts in neighboring regions.

*By: Luiz Eduardo Peret*



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## **Peter Antarius** (Levkarest, Borca)

Peter is a handsome, athletic man in his mid-20s, always wearing a black coat, with black hair and brown eyes hidden behind black sunglasses. Born in a rich family, Peter was a curious boy who, while not evil, had a rather amoral view on life, and would pay little attention to consequences. In order to avoid Ivana Boritsi's attention, his family sent him to live with his grandfather, a reclusive old man who secretly practiced dark magic. Under his tutorage, Peter quickly developed powerful magic of his own, but still wanted to use his newfound powers to do good.

Unfortunately, his actions attracted the unwanted attention of the Dark Powers. The first time he adventured, Peter resorted a bit too much to black magic, and ended up with rubbery, sickly blue-gray skin on his chest, and shiny red pupils. He believes he has either become ill or infected by some undead monster during his latest adventures.

*By: Sandro Alves*



## **Don Pablo Arión**

Don Pablo Arión is a strong, good-looking fighter from another world, who stumbled upon a misty bank while pursuing a werebeast. He is good and noble, and has been trying to enlist to some army or military force in order to fight evil in an organized way, but so far with little success. He was persecuted in Falkovnia and has found both Borca and Richemulot unfitting for his high goals. He is now wandering the South Core, after having found evidence of the presence of the werebeast he was following when he entered Ravenloft. He carries a magic bastard sword and a shield with his family crest, a rose blossoming among flames. His manners are those of an aristocrat and he is very fond of strong beverages and fine cigars.

*By: Luiz Eduardo Peret*

## **Lord Bernstein**, the One Who Walks In the Woods (Valachan)

Lord Bernstein was a paladin of Helm who was born in Cormyr, Faerum (Forgotten Realms). He went on a quest to find a special weed, which would cure the daughter of the leader of his Order of some rare disease. During his search in Briarwood, a strange mist rose from the ground and he was transported to Sithicus. At first he didn't notice what had just happened; but on the first night he stayed there he was plagued in his dreams by the image of a beautiful woman – a person known as the Blue Lady Kitiara, although he didn't know it – who pleaded him to rescue her from a nearby castle. He didn't stray from his mission, but the image of the woman continued to torment him every night, until the day he saw Nedragard Keep. Realizing it was the castle the woman in his dream spoke of, he went there in her search. He only met there the lord of the domain, Lord Soth, the Death Knight, who grew enraged at the presence of paladin. The two fought a titanic battle, but in the end the dark powers of Soth were stronger, and he disarmed Lord Bernstein. However, Soth didn't kill him; instead, he chose another punishment – he removed his helmet and exposed his face to the paladin, who grew insane at the mere sight of that evil being. Soth then had his seneschal at the time, Azrael, throw the paladin in the forest for the wolves. Bernstein survived, but he was quite crazy.

He now lives as a hermit in the woods of Valachan, a pale shadow of whom he once was – a large man with long hair and an even longer beard, who dresses in unkept lumberjack clothes. He lives in a crude cottage, and in his insanity he hears voices threatening him and sees anyone who comes near him as a shadow or a black knight, and his madness makes him kill such people. He has killed many hunters and lumberjacks in the south woods of Valachan who dare come near his territory. The valachians don't know what is the terror that stalks the woods at night, and have come to call him the One Who Walks In The Woods.

*By: Fabio Santos*

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## Gladius Bravanti (Rivalis, Darkon)

Gladius is a barely-adult halfling, who works as a carpenter and bowmaker in Rivalis. He is well known for his fairly large collection of pipes and daggers. Unknown to most people, even his family, Gladius is also a cunning and acrobatic rogue, responsible for several acts of burglary in the cities around his hometown. He will steal almost anything that catches his eye, but has made a point of following two basic principles: he will never steal from another halfling and will never steal something to make it part of his collection. Thus, he never steals daggers or pipes, preferring to buy them with the profits of his work (and his "visits" upon houses). Gladius dislikes open fights, but will not run away from a skill competition, especially one of dagger throwing. He is also very fond of riddles and spicy food.

*By: Sandro Alves*



## Lucien Bray (Tempe Falls, Darkon)

Lucien has close-cropped blonde hair, icy blue eyes, and a pale complexion. He has a charming, even enchanting smile, yet it can swiftly become a fearsome scowl. He wears a burgundy, gold-trimmed half-cape, with a burgundy and black shirt, black trousers, and dark gray boots. A large dagger with an H-shaped grip hangs from his belt. The son of a woman who was murdered by her husband for consorting with "infernal forces," Lucien has come to believe that his own birth is the result of a dark pact with devils or the undead. His sorcerous abilities have grown swiftly, earning the distrust of some and the interest of others. Lucien has embraced his dark taint, but will he turn away from evil or will he follow in his mother's footsteps? Even he doesn't know. He seeks knowledge, hoping to learn the truth about his birth. The answers he finds may determine his destiny.

*By: Ken Hart*



## Anton Broax

Anton hails from Martira Bay, a handsome but vain young man of 23 years. Beneath this charming and captivating exterior, however, lies the intelligent yet demented mind of a pathological serial killer. Anton fancies himself a "master of culture," and uses this belief to manipulate and eventually discard and kill off those who fall under his thrall. Traveling around the Core, and sometimes even meddling in other people's business as if it were his own, he uses people like objects, inviting them to act in plays, to sing in taverns, until finally, on a dark night, he kills them off, steals their valuables, and leaves their bodies in gutters. On every bloodied corpse Anton leaves a piece of parchment with his cherished quote: "Death is the most sincere form of criticism."

*By: Dion Fernandez*



## Elgard Connardson (Mordent)

Elgard Connardson is now an elderly man, walking with a cane. Not that he really needs one to walk, he is often seen singing and dancing with his cane or juggling with it. He usually has a proud attitude. People seeing him normally think "I hope I'll be that great when I become old".

He claims he is from Darkon (Martira Bay), where he was a great fighter. He spends his days walking in Mordentshire, looking for people that look like adventurers, to tease them annoyingly on "how it was better before", "how much better he and his adventuring team were", and so on, followed by unsolicited heroic tales about him. People asking him precise questions about Darkon will understand quickly he never went there.

The truth is much less heroic. Elgard was a slave in an island lost in the mists. He escaped from it about fifteen years ago, while stealing enough from his former masters to ensure he had a quiet life, not rich, but not poor

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

either, in Mordent. Arriving by boat to that new place, he changed his name. However, as he knows his former master might still be looking after him, a thin but needle sharp dagger is hidden in the cane.

*By: Joël Paquin*



## **Dirk Drake** (Nova Vaasa)

Dirk is the third son of a minor noble family of Rivtoff. In his well-furnished room, he dreamed of one day becoming a great knight. He thought his dream would come true when he joined a band of passing adventures. He helped uncover a cult responsible for grave robbing. It turns out they worshipped a trio of vampires and the heroes charged into battle, killing half of the cultists and one of the vampires. In the following months, he returned to his family home to throw a victory feast for his companions. However, the surviving cultists and vampires, intent on revenge, assaulted the house. Not a lot of what happened that night is known but what is clear the Dirk's mind shattered and he killed the survivors of the attack for fear of them turning into vampires. He fled the house and now, without a family and friends, he travels around the southern core looking to find the last of the cult. His curse from that battle is that anyone who shows interest in really getting to know him he kills, for fear of cultist spies.

*By: Neil Shaw*



## **Anchorite Claude Dulocq** (Levkarest, Borca)

Claude is a priest from the Church of Ezra, and one of the most influential. He lives in the Great Cathedral in the city of Levkarest. An ancient priest of Ezra, Claude is a tall gaunt man in his early sixties. Although he has no formal role in the hierarchy of the Great Cathedral, he is one of the oldest anchorites in the temple, and therefore he is very respected. What people don't know is it that Claude is secretly the leader of a heresy of the Church of Ezra, a secret cult

known as the Fifth Sect. It all began when he had a vision of a beautiful maiden, clad in the clothes of an anchorite, but who also had feathery wings, in his room one night. The maiden told him that she was Ezra, and that she was discontent with her followers' worship; she told Claude that they all had missed the most important piece of the Grand Scheme, and she would give him, Claude, its true meaning, but only if he would truly worship her, performing Ezra's true rituals. Claude agreed, and then Ezra proceeded to teach him about the new truth. The next day Claude went to his most loyal acolytes and began secretly to organize the Fifth Sect of Ezra, which he believes will be the last sect. Their major plan is to topple the Borcan Sect as the major sect of Ezra, in hopes of bringing the Real Truth of Ezra to all anchorites.

Claude, however, doesn't know that he is slowly but inexorably giving his life force and the life force of all his anchorites to a being from Hell, an Erynies, with plans to start a religious war in the Land of the Mists.

*By: Fabio Santos*



## **Brother Grim** (Tepest, Kelee)

Brother Grim is a strange man, who is almost always accompanied by a flock of ravens, which seem to stutter the word "justice". He's most likely encountered wandering the lands surrounding Kelee in Tepest. He dresses in gray hooded robes in an attempt not to show his hideous scarred body, which was nearly consumed by flames. His head is completely hairless and has lost almost all flesh of his ears. His skin has been replaced by scar tissue and is nearly non-existent, except for the lower half of his face, which is sometimes seen under the hood of his robe. Nelvris Grim is a half-elf in his mid-30's, but it's extremely hard to recognize him as such. He once was a promising anchorite of Ezra, but since he crossed the path of the Tepestani inquisition, a confrontation which he barely survived, things changed drastically. Brother Grim no longer serves Ezra for he is

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now a bitter individual, driven by the hunger for revenge against an specific Tepestani inquisitor which he only remembers by the sound of his voice. Once encountered, he will usually warn non-humans not to tap into Tepest, and will attack those he believes are bringing injustice to the common folk. Sometimes he will help those in need, if he believes them to be of pure heart (and/or if they are confronting the inquisition).

*By: Thorsten Kerkhoff*



## **Geraldine Harper** (Kantora, Nova Vaasa)

A kind, young and beautiful herbalist and chirurgeon among the poor of the city, Geraldine hides a darker aspect to her delicate frame, by her activities as a deranged mortician who seeks to create a perfect man for herself from the bodies left in her care. She has made several grooms for herself in the past but has been forced to destroy them after they turned on her. Destroying these abominations has only gained more trust from the public about her as they begin to see her as a hero aimed to destroy constructs, not the initial cause.

*By: Eddy Brennan*



## **Markus Hove**

An aging alchemist of fallen stature after his mind became fractured during an ill-fated experiment, his mind has developed several distinct personalities that have left him unbalanced and unpredictable, one of whom is a deranged version of himself, seeking freedom with the use of the Apparatus, a legendary artifact from the time Mordent entered the Land of Mists. Though useful for his skills as an alchemist, those that seek his skills, wisdom and experience should take care of his darker, hidden sides.

*By: Eddy Brennan*



## **Lucifer Jakes, the Night Hawk**

A native of Mordent, Jakes is a tall, heavyset man in his late thirties; he wears a neatly trimmed full beard, but keeps his red-brown hair short. Jakes is an inventor and tinkerer fascinated with mechanical gadgetry, and also a secret fighter against the darkness. An accident with an experimental set of binoculars has left his eyes very sensitive to light; he usually only goes out by night, and wears dark glasses during the day. This and the odd noises emanating from his house at all hours make his neighbors regard him with suspicion and distrust; his nocturnal wanderings and oversized spectacles have earned him the nickname "the Night Hawk". Jakes finds his neighbors' distrust disappointing but not surprising. He will be eager and willing to help adventurers solve any mystery or battle the creatures of the night, although not all of the inventions he has created to fight evil will do what he expects!

*By: Nathan Okerlund*



## **Ivram Kopesk**

Ivram Kopesk is one of the Kartakan merchants who wander the southern Core selling textile goods. He is a tall, thin man with blond hair and a lopsided smile, known for driving a hard bargain and for making one penny into two (as the Kartakans say). He is, if anything, over-friendly and familiar with those he meets; he is also extremely nosy and will pump those he meets on every conceivable subject, especially those relating to political conditions in other domains. If asked, he claims to need the information in order to know when and where to sell his goods for the best price, but some suspect that he may be collecting information on behalf of someone else...

*By: Nathan Okerlund*



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## **Bramble Kynt** (Muhar, Har'Akir)

Bramble is a bald, dark-skinned gnome with a pleasant expression. He runs the only inn in Muhar, "The Monk's Fist," although its two guest rooms are often empty (most travelers never stay – or live – long enough in Muhar to need lodging). He wears a tan-colored monk's robe and offers fatherly pearls of wisdom to his few guests. In reality, however, Bramble is an ex-monk. During his studies in Darkon years ago, the lure of arcane knowledge corrupted him, and he chose the path of the rogue. His secret goal in Har'Akir is to find a powerful magical item, and the inn provides an ideal way to gather knowledge that may aid his deceitful quest. His monk's robe is a modified Cloak of Charisma, which helped him get past the initial distrust of the local residents and the clerics of Osiris.

*By: Ken Hart*



## **Marielle Laforet** (Mordent)

Marielle is a nurse at the Mordent hospital for the poor. Her devotion to her patients is without end, and it goes way beyond that of her colleagues. As a consequence, most people in town know and like her. She spends most of her money and scarce free time helping poor children learn basic skills to write and count, and when that isn't enough, she collects funds from the rich families in town.

She is born from a local rich family but abandoned that lifestyle to help the people in need. That turned many of her former well-to-do friends into enemies, who do not have her devotion and despise seeing her showing what they should do.

Her activities make her somewhat knowledgeable about the local people. Her sense of justice is strong and she tries to help people by negotiating herself. Also, as the poor people inform her of any injustice happening, she

sometimes asks adventurers if she can't solve the problem herself.

*By: Joël Paquin*



## **Headmistress Lynn** (Nartok, Darkon)

The eyes and ears of the Kargat are said to be everywhere, and their spies could easily be anyone. But in the city of Nartok they are what no one has ever dared to suspect: the children. They are under control of a black-hearted enchantress who poses as a simple woman whose lot is to run the local orphanage. Once an orphan herself, she is seen by the community as a kindhearted woman who has devoted her life to serving those born as she was, but in truth she only cares about earning the benefits of serving her dark king.

From the moment that a child is brought to Lynn, she begins to work foul enchantments upon them that eventually dominate their wills. They become so much enthralled, that their thoughts are an open book to her and they will commit any act she requires with only a subtle mental stimulation. Some have even committed murders of which they have no memory. When the children grow to adults they become whatever she needs them to be, from upstanding members of the community, to brutal thugs in the most violent of street gangs.

She's even raised a few children that have become adventures or monster hunters who, while believing that they rid the world of evil, are in reality the unknowingly hidden hands of darkness themselves...

*By: Stephen Heath*



## **The Houndsmaster of Keoghetta Lodge**

Nobody knows the true name of the Houndsmaster of Keoghetta Lodge, a large wooden shack found somewhere deep in the forests of Forlorn. A few local travelers, however, would mention that the old

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Houndsmaster had seen the true nature of the world, and wishes only to be left alone. So he stays in his ramshackle house, fighting off trespassers from his property by occasionally releasing a large pack of rabid dogs into the surrounding forest, making sure that no outsider would ever come near his house and steal whatever he hides inside.

*By: Dion Fernandez*



## Sir William McHolm

Sir William McHolm is a human paladin with an unusual history: he was a young soldier in the army that took Barovia back from the Tergs under the command of Strahd von Zarovich. He was a member of a small garrison responsible for locating the last Tergs at the Barovian borders, while his strong religious devotion was beginning to manifest as vestigial paladin abilities. While alone on patrol, he found a hidden cave, where a Terg sorceress was trying to summon a powerful devil in a desperate attempt to destroy the Barovian army. He disrupted the ritual and the resultant magic explosion sealed the cave, killed the sorceress and trapped Sir William in suspended animation for more than 400 years. He was recently found by a mining operation in Borca. Sir William speaks old-fashioned Balok, dresses out of fashion and firmly believes he should pledge his loyalty to the man he believes to be the current descendant of the original Strahd von Zarovich.

*By: Luiz Eduardo Peret*



## Juliana Ordensvald

Juliana is a mistress of blades. A wise and beautiful woman of 27 years, she has throughout her life learned to master the art of pain and how to control it. To this native of Falkovnia, a land so riddled with terror and pain, a sharp and shiny blade arouses deep, instinctive passions close to bodily pleasure. No intimate encounter with Juliana would be complete

without her "sharing her interests" with her partner, an episode which usually ends with that same partner begging to be released from bloody pain and steel bondage. So far, no one has been able to escape Juliana's powerful allure, a combination of savage beauty and vicious power, just like her collection of knives, axes, swords and blades.

*By: Dion Fernandez*



## Pénélope Poudrier (Dementelieu)

Mrs Poudrier owns an inn in Port-a-Lucine near the Opera House, with 8 rooms and a restaurant, named "The Singing Hawk". Her well-rated inn is the most precious thing to her and she will go out of her way to make sure it is well kept, that the food is better than in any other inn, and that the patrons are happy and entertained. Her donations to the local church are generous and she often leads charity events for the poor, the local asylum, or for an hospital.

However, while maintaining a friendly facade with the inn's patrons, she is very rough with her employees. She pays them meagerly and most of the time with weeks of delay. Mrs Poudrier makes them work hard, and often yells threats at them when no patron can hear. In fact, her terrorized employees are treated like slaves.

She is in her late 50's and in good health. She is tall, slightly overweight and her graying hairs are dyed brown. She likes to wear aristocratic clothes when entertaining her patrons.

*By: Joël Paquin*

## The Purbblind Prophet

Miss Genata is a 55-year-old woman of good alignment, living in a village. She is short, thin, has gray hair and, hunched back. She was born with very poor eyesight. She had a very normal childhood, but at her teenage, her main talent became apparent. While she is not able to see our world well enough, she can see in the world of the spirits, and even talk with them,

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sense their power and persuade them to respond to her. She has ghost sight, ethereal empathy and good diplomatic skills when talking with incorporeal and ethereal beings. Genata has these abilities and perhaps the lack of eyesight, because she is (unknown to her) tied with a ghost of 3rd rank, named Ricæ. Ricæ has the power to cast an augury spell once per day and a divination spell once per week. When Genata is alone, she can try to persuade Ricæ to cast these spells to answer her questions. Genata has no powers over the ghost except her persuasion.

*By: alhoon*



## **Dr. Robert R. Reuland** (Lamordia)

Robert is a Lamordian man in his late twenties, who lectures at various Universities. His area of expertise is monster lore, the dark arts, and other philosophical ideas and beliefs. While many of his colleagues think that he is rather strange, most students find him interesting and entertaining. Robert is an orphan due to his family (mother, father, and older sister) being killed when he was only a young boy. A strange and murderous being, which whistled as he left a trail of carnage, killed not only Robert's family but also most of his small village. Robert survived, but he was struck in the left eye by the fiend's whirling pike. Sadly, Robert is the sole surviving heir of the Reuland household. While he did not inherit a lot of money, he did earn enough to live a life of the academic. With a secret determination, he wants to learn enough to find and destroy his family's murderer...

*By: Jason True*

## **Michelle "piglet" Richards** (Lamordia)

Michelle is an attractive-looking woman in her early 50's, but having several unpleasant traits, including bad manners, a disregard for most authority and a snorting laugh, which earned her the nickname her friends most usually call her by, (the other being "silly trout"). Her body odor is often dreadful and her breath foul from alcohol. Her clothes look

expansive but they are generally of bad taste. To top all that unpleasantness, she has a squeaky little voice.

She believes all non-humans are thieves and do not trust any. She is condescending and quick to tell others "I told you so, nah nah nah".

However, she is a gifted storyteller with a talent for writing children stories, with many fairies as her specialty. Her children books sell well, but few parents bring their children for her public lectures.

*By: Joël Paquin*



## **Alistair Richmond**

A powerful medium that had reasonable talent for contacting the dead, he made a living at the profession for some years before a séance at the crescendo of the Requiem left him unable to stop the possessions he placed himself in. Since this time, Alistair has found himself possessed endlessly by a vast array of spirits and ghosts, some simply lost, others bent on hatred and the destruction of life. Alistair has some periods of piece, during which time his is depressive and suicidal. Having been placed in the care of several sanitariums in the past, he has managed to escape them all and is regarded as dangerous to those who know of him. However, his knowledge of incorporeal undead is almost unequalled throughout the demiplane.

*By: Eddy Brennan*



## **Katarina Shelley** (Tepest)

A Hallowed Witch in her early thirties, Katarina is gaining quite a name for herself as a hero for the people. She travels in disguise and hides deep emotional scars that she vents as pure hatred for the quarry of the hunts. Originally from Kellee, Katarina was part of coven of witches discovered by the Inquisition by information sold by a Sorcerous Witch. Whilst

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she hunted a pack of marauding Plains Dogs in neighboring Nova Vaasa, her family was slaughtered. She now fights a secret battle against the Inquisition and Sorcerous Witches across the demiplane.

*By: Eddy Brennan*



## **Peter Smith** (any place will do)

Mr Smith is an average tall man, of about 35 or 40 years old. Nothing is special about the way he looks and he usually blends well in a crowd. He often wear gray clothes. He doesn't have an extraordinary job, for an average pay, and his conversation is ordinary. He doesn't drink more thea his neighbours and do not smoke in bed.

*By: Anonymous ...:)*



## **Harzig Van Dervaal** (Rivalis, Darkon)

Harzig is a small human boy of 8. He lives with his parents on the outskirts of Rivalis. He wears his black hair in a long ponytail. His blue eyes blaze with youthful energy. He is never without the good luck charm his brother Brerg made for him. Much to his parent's dismay, he loves visiting the vados of the Vistani, and the Vistani, in turn, value him as a beloved customer. Four months ago, Harzig's brother, Brerg, a mercenary, was hired by a merchant to help guard his caravan to Sri Raji. Harzig now pesters adventurers, and other travelers if they have seen any sign of his brother, or the caravan he was helping to guard.

*By: Stanton Fink*



## **Teresa Waterford**

Subject to a magical accident in the year 754, at the age of 23, Teresa was left horribly scarred and shamed by her failure. Having later been abandoned by her family, all high members of a secret society of arcanists in Lamordia, Teresa has sought redemption by questing for a device that will restore her beauty to what it once was. Whilst she may appear generous to those she encounters, she harbors darker motives to doublecross or rob anyone of anything she believes may aid her quest to regain her beauty and is cuurently wanted for over a dozen murders and other crimes across the Core.

*By: Eddy Brennan*



## **Diana and Andromeda Xanat**

Diana and Andromeda Xanat are beautiful, sensual and evil, red-haired Mulan twins from Hazlan. Diana is a bard and Andromeda is a sorceress. Both have the seed of evil deep within, having consorted with foul spirits at the beginning of their careers. Because of a failed powers check during a dark ritual, Diana has no shadow and Andromeda must eat a living animal everyday before meditating for spells. As a reward for their evil deeds, Diana can become incorporeal and Andromeda can charm animals, both once per day. Andromeda, unable to attract a true familiar, has created a bat-shaped humanoid homunculus and made it fill the gap. They roam the Core collecting magic items, trinkets and books, sometimes in undercover missions for King Hazlik. They always dress red.

*By: Luiz Eduardo Peret*





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## ROAD KILLS

### EVENTS AND SIGHTS FOR TRAVELERS

By: Joel Paquin (Gotten Grabmal)

Strange events and horror scenes to make sure your players have memorable trips in Ravenloft.

This article presents some scenes that can be used by a DM to enlighten road travels (in a manner of speaking, of course). While the players are traveling, the DM can spice up his or her campaign instead of the usual random wandering monster roll, which is not as commonly used in Ravenloft as in other settings.

These road scenes are to contribute to the atmosphere of Ravenloft while on the road. Some scenes might be horrific, but they are all events of no real long-term importance in a campaign, they are just random events. They are crafted to be without suite, unless the DM choose to use some of these events to start a campaign or as a meaningful event of the on-going campaign.

All these events are to be used preferably in isolated areas. Most events are unique, to be used once. With small preparation, these scenes can be used to elevate the fear and anguish level of the players. Some of them, set in isolated settings, will surely trouble the players and have them taking turns as guards at night as they will believe "something" seems to be out there.

As other horror techniques, this should not be abused by the DM. Also, they can be used for roleplay matter in the next town, as small talk topics to introduce important NPCs in a greater campaign perspective.

The explanation of those events is left to the DM: some don't need to be explained or some can have unknown or unexplained causes (unexplained things are often spookier).

The second section of the article is about events that could happen while on a boat travel on the treacherous Ravenloft seas. Once in a while, someone on the Kargatane board asks for ideas to spice up boat travels and those are the suggestions I once offered, and new ones.

### Random Ravenloft Travel Encounters

Random Encounter Table (if needed - or the DM can choose the he/she think most appropriate):

1	Procession of the Repentant
2	Death of a Traveller
3	Killer Rabbit
4	Gorey Rain
5	Lone Cabin in the Woods
6	Blood but No Flesh
7	Vampires on the Road
8	Werewolves on the Road
9	Flight of Ravens
10	Pack of Rats
11	Diseased
12	Sick Forest
13	Web on the Road
14	Hangman Tree
15	Headless Bodies
16	Ghost and Mists
17	Sculpted Trees

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## Procession of the Repentant

A parade of old persons, all dressed in old dusty black clothes (or water soaked if it rains). Women wear black widow's veils. Some can hardly walk and use a cane. They all look old, tired and sad. They walk slowly, mostly silent except for the bells some of them carry, and some are murmuring unheard prayers. Others carry crosses or lighted candles in their hands.

If the players speak to them, most will ignore the players and look at them with fearful eyes. If they insist, the only answer they get is "Repent ! Repent !! Repent !!!" from a crazed person's eyes.

## Death of a Traveller

An enclosed carriage made of wood, painted black, with two horses, is immobile on the side of the road. One door of the carriage has been torn off and is on the ground.

Inside, a pool of blood is found. No body is found in the carriage or around it. Many claw marks are found on the carriage. Nothing of value is left in the carriage.

## Killer Rabbit

*(a Monty Python tribute)*

A dead wolf is seen on the road. Its throat appears to have been sliced. A minute later, the players see three small gray rabbits (or squirrels, or chipmunks) near the road border. Two flee at the players' sight but one suddenly changes to a 3-foot high hideous twisted humanoid horror, jumping like a rabbit toward the players, showing crazed red eyes, rabbit ears and long, sharp front teeth. Its mouth froths and it seems to giggle lightly. It attacks, and the DM should put emphasis on the fact that the horror is aiming for a player's throat with its long teeth.

Suggested monster stats: move 40 feet, as many hit dice as the highest level person in the party (maximum 8); number of attacks

according to hit dice; penalty of -4 to hit for a called shot attack; damage of 2-8; throat struck on a natural 20: add 6d6 to damage.

After the attack, the players may wonder where the other two rabbits went...

## Gorey Rain

This works better if the players have antagonized the darklord of the domain, as this rain is clearly unnatural and can be used to install an oppressive mood on the players.

First, dark clouds form in the sky, but over the players only, i.e. the far horizon is clear in all directions. Then cold rain falls for a long time. It ends with a short extraordinary rain of hideous red and brown toads that splat on the ground (possible damage to exposed players). Some of the toads are deformed (ex: 6-legged, or two-headed toad). The dead animals will remain there for a few days and will attract many carrion eaters and birds.

## Lone Cabin in the Woods

On an isolated road, a cabin is seen a short distance from the road. In it, the bodies of an entire family are found, and investigation shows all have been killed in their sleep by knife wounds, less than a week ago. Nothing has been stolen.

## Blood but No Flesh

On a road, the players see the fresh tracks of a wagon, probably a merchant's, ahead of them.

Then, on a curve, the chariot is seen in the middle of the road, immobile. All its occupants and the horses have vanished. No traces on the ground surround the chariot. A little blood has been spilled. Nothing has been stolen (DM's choice for the merchandise).

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## Vampires on the Road

One or more bodies lie on the road. Investigation show the peasants have been drained dry of blood and the telltale marks of vampires are on their necks. The persons have been killed less then a day ago. This encounter is more effective if the players are in an isolated countryside and have to sleep outside.

## Werewolves on the Road

Some fresh human booted foot traces are seen on the road the players are traveling. After a while, clothing is found on the road, and wolf traces leave the area to enter the woods...

## Flight of Ravens

A flight of about 20 large black ravens follows the players for half a day, quietly flying from tree to tree, landing on tree branches and watching the players. They do not croak, even once, following the party silently. They suddenly leave quickly, croaking, as if they were aware of something the players haven't seen yet.

## Pack of Rats

From the direction the players are going, an abnormally huge pack of normal rats is encountered, moving fast toward the players. The rats seem to be fleeing from something, totally ignoring the players, unless they are attacked first.

## Diseased

A human body is lying on the road. Its face is swollen and pus-covered, like by a horrible disease.

It appears the person had clawed itself from pain; some tufts of his hair are still in one hand.

## Sick Forest

A large part of an isolated forest has been destroyed by strange gray strangling vines, or a wildy colored mushroom-like infestation. Under those vegetal attacks, the trees decay and rot rapidly. Druids or rangers can't identify the origin of the infestation.

## Web on the Road

This rarely used road in a forest is blocked by a large dusty spider web, hanging from one side of the road to the other.

## Hangman Tree

A large tree has 1-3 dead bodies hanging from its branches, a rope around their neck and hands tied behind their back. As player characters pass, dark well-fed ravens stop pecking the bodies and watch the players pass in front of them.

## Headless Bodies

On an isolated path, 1-4 bodies are found. Each traveler has been cleanly decapitated. The bodies are at least a month old and are rotting. The heads are nowhere to be found (players who have encountered the Headless Horseman, or have heard of him before should now start worrying).

## Ghost and Mist

A mist slowly and quietly rises from the soil. It gets thicker and thicker slowly until vision blurs to about 20 feet. After a while 1d4+1 faces are seen in the mists. They are children's faces, and they appear to be wailing. All is silent. It stops after five minutes.

## Sculpted Trees

On the road ahead, many trees near the border of the road have a humanoid shape, and some have light reflecting eyes. Upon investigation, those trees were groomed to look

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humanoid, and their eyes are nothing more than mirror shards. It is unknown who did these and for what purpose.

## Appendix - Sea encounters

Presented below are short ideas for random Ravenloft sea encounters.

### Shipwreck

A barely floating shipwreck is encountered. Nothing living (or unliving) is found on the merchant ship. The cargo is wasted (for example, silk or spices).

### No Sun

While away from the coast and isolated at sea, the sun doesn't rise for one day. The cause of that phenomenon is unknown and it doesn't happen in the next days.

### No Wind

Suddenly, there is absolutely no wind for a few (1-4) days. The boat is isolated and the crew is nervous.

### No Food Left

All the food on board rots quickly, putting a big pressure on the cleric (create food spells). The only fish caught are dead ones. The crew is close to mutiny.

### Hidden Passenger ?

There are signs / events that lead to think that something nasty is hidden in the cargo ... or is it "only" gremishkas? A search of the cargo shows one large case to be a coffin! (However, the body in it is very dead - and not undead. Someone has in fact sent remains to his distant relatives).

### Bad Omens

Bad omens are seen: comets, albatrosses crashing on the board and dying, weird dead fish (or dead whale, leviathan, dead kraken) are seen floating.

### Death on Board

Someone dies on board from old age, or something natural. That person is buried at sea. PCs will never believe it and will be nervous !

### Sharks

Many sharks follow the boat, their dorsal fins visible at times.

### Haunted Ship

The undead haunted ship encounter is of course is a classic!

(Please see "Crescent Moon" in the Kargatane's *Haunted Sites* netbook - a haunted ship, complete with stats)

### Flaming Ship

On a misty night, a flaming ship (or a drowning one) is seen from a long distance.

If the PCs ship tries to get there to rescue the crew, they will lose visual contact in the mist after a while, and will never find it, not even a trace... Was it an illusion ? A ghostly apparition ?

### Spoiled Food

People get sick after eating. It happens again the next day. Suspicions of a poisoner get into the crew. In fact, an infected rat keeps contaminating the food when it comes out to feed.

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## Sea Monsters

On the topic of Ravenloft aquatic humanoid monsters, there are the staples like sahuagins, deep ones, lacedons, sea-zombies, etc. Also, a sinister version of harpies may haunt the coasts of any mist-shrouded sea.

*Children of the Night: Vampires* had Audun Beck, a sea vampire. The Kargatane's Book of Sorrows had an entry for a wereorca, one of the nastiest lycanthropes around.

## Island of Terrors

One day, a far sighting of an island (possibly a domain Island of Terror) is announced from the observer nest.

It could be used as a possible introduction for a future adventure of the campaign, or the food or water supply might be low and the captain may choose to inquire for replenishment...



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# Running the Place

Mythica Nephos

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## PSIONICS IN RAVENLOFT

### A GUIDE TO ADAPT MIND POWERS TO THE DREAD REALM

By: Sean Pointdexter  
(God Brain)

A guide for DMs who wish to incorporate psions and psionic-users in their games...with a bonus inclusion of a psionic-using Illithid, completely adaptable for The Land of Mists.

#### A Guide to this guide

The reader will notice that many of the psionic powers vary from spells of the same name. The reason for this is simple: psionics are different. Psionics attract the attention of the dark powers differently than magic, and as such they respond differently. There are things that psions and psychic warriors can do that spell casters cannot, many of their powers are dramatically weakened in Ravenloft. One serious disadvantage being that a great deal of their more potent powers require mental contact with others...a perilous act for the manifester if the targets mind is "alien" or insane. However, many of their powers are strengthened, especially those that resemble spells of the same name.

In Ravenloft, psionics work differently than in most planes. If magic is rare in the demiplane, then psionics are next to non-existent. Aside from the illithids, only the inhabitants of Kalinday and the Thanni of Barovia exhibit psionic talent to any significant degree. Psionics have started to catch on among the Divinity of Mankind celebrants, but has yet to be practiced in an organized manner. Because of this rarity, creatures native to Ravenloft have less resistance to these powers. With the notable

exception of creatures from Bluetspur or Kalinday, spell resistance does not naturally apply to psionic powers. Still, such protection does afford some help...a creature with spell resistance is also considered to have a point of power resistance for each point above ten (i.e. a creature with SR 15 is considered to have PR 5). Conversely, power resistance against psionic powers affords identical protection against magic, so a creature with PR of 15 would have spell resistance of 5.

There are exceptions to this. All Darklords with spell resistance are considered to have an identical rating of power resistance. The dark powers allow this in order to prevent the psionic using inhabitants from having an "unfair" advantage over their chosen ones. Likewise, outsiders with spell resistance are familiar enough with psionic powers that their spell or power resistance applies equally to either psionics or magic respectively.

On the other hand, psionic items that confer bonuses to hit like magical weapons work equally well against creatures with damage reduction. Magical spells do not automatically dispel or protect against psionic powers unless the power's description specifically states that a certain spell will protect against it. Likewise, psionic powers cannot detect or remove magical effects, though obviously they can be used to repair damage done by spells. The DM is the final arbiter of this, and common sense should be applied. (Example: the power ectoplasmic wall can be used to protect a psionic user from a fireball or lightning bolt lobbed at them by a spell caster, but the same spell caster using detect magic on the ectoplasmic wall would likely determine that said wall was non-magical. Likewise, casting dispel magic on an astral construct would have no effect, other than possibly amusing the psion that manifested it.)

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Psionics-using characters have a special defense against madness effects. Due to their intense training and devotion to attuning their minds, psionic creatures and character can resist any failed madness save once per day. They do not escape unharmed, however...use of this defense causes the psionic user's mind to literally collapse under its own power, and it takes all the character's will to keep from falling over the edge. The character is unable to use any further psionic powers for 1d4+1 days (day = full 24hr. period). Any subsequent failed madness saves result in a complete collapse, however...and the character immediately suffers the effects of BOTH failed madness saves.

The Ravenloft Campaign Setting handbook mentions on page 70 that any contact with an "alien" or insane mind results in an immediate madness save on the part of the psionic using character. More so than any other class, the psionic user depends on contact with other minds for many of their more potent powers to function. However, because of this the psionic using character learns how to navigate the treacherous passageways of enemy minds with more skill than other classes. As such, a psionics-using character that contacts an alien mind and makes madness save for his/her efforts is forever after not obligated to make madness saves when contacting creatures of that kind. This applies whether they fail or make the madness save. Creatures of that kind include anything of that race, though not necessarily the entire subtype. So, if Brell the psion makes a madness save after contacting the mind of an illithid, he never has to make another madness save when contacting an illithid mind, though he would still have to make one if he contacted the mind of another aberration (like a Beholder). The only exceptions to this are insane minds, which by their very nature are all different enough that a psionic user never gets "used" to them, and Darklords, who are so thoroughly twisted that nothing could shield or prepare one for contact with their sick and depraved minds.

The concept of mental contact deserves further explanation. Actual mental contact requires that one inject some aspect of one's

mind into another. Think of it as actually reaching one's hand inside the mind and pulling something out. Some psionic powers require that the manifester only look at the surface of the mind, while others deal with shielding the manifester from things emanating from it. Such powers do not constitute actual mental contact. Other powers require a more probing investigation or manipulation of the mind, and as such put the manifester at risk of drawing back a part of the touched mind that there consciousness isn't capable of handling.

Using psionic defense modes against the attacks of an alien or insane mind does not constitute mental contact. Likewise, an alien or insane mind using a mental attack mode against a character does not constitute mental contact for the purposes of madness saves. However, use of a psionic attack mode against an alien or insane mind does constitute mental contact, as it requires a degree of manipulation of the targets mind beyond that of casual telepathic observation. Incidentally, anything that is considered to have an "alien" mind is immune to any and all madness effects that might arise from the use of their psionic powers. They just are. (Example: Benny the Illithid need not make a madness save when using a psionic attack power against Sara the Astral Deva, Bob the Evil Treant, or Crazy Eddy the Bridge-Licking Axe-Murder). They may or may not still be driven insane by other methods, depending on whether that creature is capable of being going insane...though it is not advised that the PCs attempt to gaslight a Beholder.

These rules assume that the DM will be using the "Psionics are different" rules variant mentioned in the Psionics Handbook, pg. 39. This generally works best for psionics in Ravenloft. However, if the DM insists on treating psionics the same as magic, then many of the rules listed above will not apply. Still, the DM should consider giving the psionic user some kind of distinction from magic.

Astral Travel- Several psionic powers involve astral travel and planar movement. Psionics work identical to magical spells in this respect. See pg. 92 and 95 of the Ravenloft



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Campaign Setting for details. Note that the RCS states that the Dark Powers allow the transferal of astral matter (including ectoplasm) into the demiplane...it is more difficult to let it out (see Astral Construct below).

## 0-Level Powers

**Control Shadow** - This power works the same in the Demiplane, though there is a flat 2% chance that the animated shadow animates as the undead creature of the same name. It remains under the control of the creator for as long as the power duration is in effect, but once this expires it becomes free willed. If this happens, this power requires a dark powers check.

**Missive** - Use of this power does not constitute contact with another mind, as it is basically the telepathic equivalent of shouting a message across the room. As such, no madness save is required if contact with an “alien” mind is made (pg.70, RCS)

**Telepathic Projection** - This power can slightly modify a fear or horrors save, granting the recipient a +1 to a horror or fear save. However, as this power must be used before the save is made, the manifester must somehow be aware that the recipient has just failed a horror or fear save. This power does constitute contact with another mind, and may require a madness save if an “alien” mind is touched (pg.70, RCS)

## 1st Level Powers

**Know Location** - This power will reveal to the manifester his/her relation to the nearest prominent location in the Domain that he/she currently occupies, but cannot reveal information about prominent locations in neighboring realms if the domain borders are sealed, or the domain is a pocket or alone in the mists (i.e. Bluetspur, Souragne, etc.). If the Darklord of the domain is somehow aware that this power is being used, the Darklord can send deceptive information to the manifester about where he/she is. This power will not reveal to the manifester that they are in the Demiplane of Dread if they are an outlander, but it will reveal

to them that they are not on their home plane (“we’re not in Kansas anymore, Toto...”)

**Object Reading** - Any item that would reveal information about a Darklord that the Darklord wishes to conceal can be disguised if the Darklord in question is aware this power is being used. The Darklord can place false or misleading information on the object, leave it as it is, or have it not reveal anything. Reading an evil, intelligent magical item constitutes contact with an “alien” mind, and as such requires a madness save (pg.70, RCS)

**Astral Construct I** - This power holds fearful consequences for the manifester if the Dark Powers take notice of it. When this power is manifested, there is a base 2% chance, multiplied by the hit dice of the summoned astral construct, which the ectoplasmic being will take on its own intelligence. In effect, it becomes a Dread Construct, with an intelligence of 9 and an alignment of Chaotic Evil. However, this being remains under the control of the manifester until the power’s duration expires, at which point it dissipates as normal. However, in exactly 13 hours, the construct will reform in the exact spot it dissipated with its new intelligence. It has only one thing on its mind: destruction of its “parent”. The Astral Construct has all the powers assigned to it by its creator, as well as full hit points. It has no means of finding its creator other than wandering about looking for him/her. However, it speaks one language that its creator knew. Its zeitberger is the mere sight of its “parent”, which causes it go attack on sight. Multiple dread astral constructs will not join forces to find their mutual “parent”, and may in fact fight each other for the privilege of killing him/her. The astral construct will not reform as a dread construct if it was destroyed in battle.

**Bite of the Wolf** - One who is bitten by a manifester using this power must make a mild (DC 12) Fort save to resist contracting lycanthropy. Those who fail become a werewolf on the next full moon. Obviously, one who is immune to lycanthropy is also immune to this power. Use of this power requires a dark powers

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check if used against a target susceptible to lycanthropy.

**Spider Climb** - While this power is largely unchanged, manifesting it causes the character to grow tarantula-like fur on his/her fingers, and a set of vestigial “spider-eyes” on his/her forehead...seeing a character like this is cause for a fear check (DC 14).

**Empathy** - Use of this power does not constitute mental contact...however, Darklords may send false emotional information to the manifester if he/she so desires.

**Lesser Mindlink** - This power absolutely constitutes mental contact, and may be cause for a madness check is an “alien” mind is contacted (pg.70, RCS).

**Sense Link** - This power also constitutes mental contact, though a Darklord may “pacify” his/her senses in order to deceive the manifester. If this is done, then a madness check is not required, as doing so would clearly let the manifester know that “something wasn’t right”.

## 2nd Level Powers

**Clairaudience/Clairvoyance** - This power cannot be used to see past a sealed domain border or past the misty border, nor can it be used to spy on a Darklord.

**Sensitivity to Psychic Impressions** - This power basically allows the manifester to see a limited interpretation of a locations ethereal resonance. Using this power while in or near a sinkhole of evil might call for a fear or horror save.

**Astral Construct II** - See Astral Construct I...

**Ecto Puppet** - See Astral Construct I...the “tether” between the manifester and his/her construct does remain in place after the construct reforms.

**Sever the Tie** - Undead receive a bonus equal to their turn resistance to their Will save against this power. Otherwise, it is unchanged.

**Claws of the Bear** - Same as the 1st level power bite of the wolf, though the save DC increases to 13, and the infected lycanthrope becomes a were-bear. Use of this power requires a dark powers check if used against a target susceptible to lycanthropy.

**Sustenance** - This power cannot be used by vampires to suppress their hunger, since this is not a natural biological, metabolic function. A natural lycanthrope can use this power to suppress the need to eat raw flesh, but an infected lycanthrope cannot.

**Sense Psychoportation** - This power is unable to detect if a Darklord is using the psychoportation discipline, if the Darklord wishes to keep it a secret. However, if they want the manifester to know they are using it, they may allow themselves to be detected.

**Aversion** - Using this power inflicts upon the recipient the minor horror effect of the same name (pg.56). This replaces the psionics

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handbook duration of the power. Though this in effect makes it more powerful, use of this power does call for a dark powers check.

**Brain Lock** - Use of this power constitutes mental contact.

**Detect Thoughts** - Use of this power does not constitute mental contact, though the thoughts of Darklords can be hidden, changed, or revealed at the Darklord's pleasure. A Darklord that reveals his/her darkest thoughts can subject the manifester to a horror save.

## 3rd Level Powers

**Remote Viewing** - Any Darklord can hide his/her presence from the manifester, or reveal it at the Darklord's pleasure. If the Darklord is doing something particularly nasty, a horror or fear check might be called for.

**Undead Sense** - Any Darklord can hide his/her presence from the manifester, or reveal it at the Darklord's pleasure.

**Astral Construct III**- See Astral Construct I.

**Bite of the Tiger** - As bite of the wolf, but the save vs. lycanthropy is DC 14, and the infected lycanthrope becomes a were-tiger. Use of this power against an enemy susceptible to lycanthropy requires a dark powers check.

**Claws of the Vampire** - This power just screams out for a dark powers check. On the other hand, the amount of damage increases to 1d10. Any enemy susceptible to vampirism slain by the use of this power rises in three nights as a vampire, or vampire spawn if less than 5 HD. Either way, the vampire is free willed, not under the control of the manifester that slew it, and will likely be quite unhappy.

**Astral Steed** - As Astral Construct I.

**Dimension Slide** - This power cannot be used to bypass a sealed domain border, even if the manifester can see past the border.

**Fate Link** - If either of the linked individuals fails a fear, horror, madness, or dark powers check, they are both affected.

**False Sensory Input** - The manifester can make a scene of horror or fear more or less frightening with this power. In essence, you can increase or decrease the DC of the save by 50%. If used to increase a fear or horror save, use of this power requires a dark powers check.

**Mindlink** - As lesser mindlink.

**Schism** - There is a base 6% chance that the second mind becomes a chaotic evil, independent intelligence. If the dominant brain (the first one) is somehow incapacitated, the chaotic evil brain takes over and the character becomes an NPC under the DM's control until the power's duration expires, or the dominant brain can take control again.

## 4th Level Powers

**Anchored Navigation** - This power does not function across a closed domain border. Ever.

**Aura Sight** - This power cannot detect the presence of evil or good, though the rest of its abilities function normally. A character that is "overwhelmed" by an aura, as described by the power, is subject to a mild (DC 10 + ½ target creature's HD) madness save. Similarly, Darklords can choose to obscure their aura, make it seem benign, or reveal it to the manifester. Viewing the revealed aura of a Darklord is subject to an immediate madness save. Undead do not have auras, as they are not alive, so this power can be effective in attempting to ferret out undead creatures. Undead Darklords (such as Strahd or Azalin) can intentionally produce a false, friendly aura as normal.

**Fate of One** - This power allows you to re-roll a failed fear, horror, or madness save.

**Astral Construct IV** - See astral construct I.

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**Dismiss Ectoplasm** - This power can be handy for dispelling pesky astral constructs that refused to stay dissipated. If used on a character in ectoplasmic form, the target cannot be dispelled to the astral plane after being dismissed. If this effect is rolled, the character is instead dispelled to a random location in the misty border, unless the domain borders are sealed...in which case the character appears at a random location right at the edge of the border.

**Dimension Door** - This power cannot be used to cross a sealed domain border.

**Dismissal** - This power does not actually send an extra planar creature back to its home plane. Instead, the outsider is sent to a random location in the misty border, unless the domain borders are sealed...in which case the outsider appears at a random location right at the edge of the border, but not within a mile of the manifester. That would just be mean.

**Freedom of Movement** - This power does not allow the manifester to move through a sealed domain border.

**Fatal Attraction** - Not only does the use of this power constitute mental contact for the purpose of madness saves, it also requires a dark powers check.

**Forced Mindlink** - As lesser mindlink, only use of this power on an unwilling subject requires a dark powers check.

**Mindwipe** - Use of this power requires a dark powers check.

**Tailor Memory** - This power can be used to implant a fake horrific experience. Successfully manifesting this power on a target's mind allows the manifester to force an immediate fear or horror check (manifester's choice) with a DC of 14 + the manifester's Cha. modifier. Using the power in this way calls for a dark powers check. In any event, this power requires mental contact with the target's mind, as other telepathic powers like mindlink and false sensory input.

## 5th Level Powers

**Sense Psionics** - A Darklord can disguise its own psionic use from the manifester, if it so desires. This power cannot sense the use of psionic powers across a sealed domain border, or through the mists.

**Ectoplasmic Shambler** - There is a base 24% chance that the shambler returns after being dissipated, similar to the effects of an astral construct power.

**Incarnate** - Use of this power to make a baneful psionic effect permanent requires a dark powers check, even if the power being made permanent does not itself require a dark powers check.

**Clairtangency** - This power cannot be used through a sealed domain border, or through the mists.

**Psychic Vampire** - This power requires a dark powers check if used on an unwilling target.

**Adapt Body** - This power can be used to allow the manifester to survive inside a sealed domain border, but it cannot be used to cross it.

**Metamorphosis** - While this power works normally in Ravenloft, witnessing the transformation will likely induce a fear save.

**Sending** - This power cannot cross a sealed domain border, or the mists.

**Teleport** - This power cannot allow the manifester to cross a sealed domain border, though it can allow the user to cross the misty borders. If the manifester attempts to escape a sealed domain border, the power takes them right up to the edge of the border and drops them off at a random location along it that may or may not be hospitable. As would be imagined, this power cannot help the manifester escape the demiplane.

**Teleport Trigger** - As teleport.

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**Mind Probe** - Use of this power constitutes mental contact.

## 6th Level Powers

**Precognition** - As divination.

**Astral Construct IV** - As astral construct I.

**Banishment** - As dismissal.

**Retrieve** - This power cannot be used to call an item across a sealed domain border, even if you can see it.

**Mind Switch** - Use of this power on an unwilling target requires a dark powers check.

## 7th Level Powers

**Improved Anchored Navigation** - As anchored navigation.

**Astral Construct VII** - See astral construct I.

**Divert Teleport** - This power cannot be used to send someone across a sealed domain border, as Teleport, though passage through the misty border is allowed.

**Fission** - There is a flat 2% chance, per HD of the duplicate created by this power, which the duplicate does not rejoin with the manifester at the duration of the power. Instead, it becomes an exact double with a chaotic evil alignment, all the current power points, skills, feats, and powers of the original, and a burning hatred for the manifester.

**Phase Door** - As one would imagine, this power cannot be used to cross a sealed domain border.

**Plane Shift** - This power works in Ravenloft, though it does not allow the user to escape the Demiplane of Dread, nor does it allow them to cross a sealed domain border. For the purposes of this power, different domains are considered separate planes.

**Teleport Without Error** - As teleport, only the manifester may choose where along the sealed domain border they wish to be deposited if unable to escape.

**Insanity** - Not only does use of this power constitute mental contact, but it also requires a dark powers check.

**Ultrablast** - Use of this power does not constitute mental contact, but it may require a dark powers check if used carelessly (i.e. in a room crowded with children).

## 8th Level Powers

**Hypercognition** - At the DM's discretion, this power may or may not reveal important information about a Darklord. The nature of the Demiplane allows for misleading or downright false information to be substituted for actual information, however...so manifesters should be wary of crucial information gained in this manner about a Darklord.

**Recall Death** - Though not actually a necromantic effect, this power resembles one closely enough to call for a dark powers check.

**Astral Construct VIII** - See astral construct I.

**Improved Clairtangency** - As clairsentience.

**Shadow Body** - If the manifester is slain while using this power, they arise in three days as an undead shadow with the same HD, ability scores (where applicable), and powers as it had when alive. The character's alignment becomes chaotic evil, and it becomes an NPC under the control of the DM. It remembers its past life, and may wish to hunt down its former associates, just for kicks, and destroy them.

**Dream Travel** - The DM has three options when using this power - 1. the power just doesn't work, 2. the power actually sends the manifester to the Nightmare Lands, or 3. the power allows the manifester to travel to the Realm of Dreams (see Manual of the Planes) but



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any attempt to actually escape Ravenloft through that plane automatically fails. In any event, this power cannot be used to cross a sealed domain border.

**Teleportation Circle** - As teleportation.

**Mind Blank** - This power temporarily makes the target immune to the effects of any failed horror, fear, or madness saves. However, this only protects the manifester from such saves that are failed while the power is in effect. Once the duration expires, whatever horror, fear, or madness saves the character would have suffered take hold, and cannot be removed again by use of this power.

**Mind Seed** - Use of this power constitutes mental contact, and if used on an unwilling target requires a dark powers check.

## 9th Level Powers

**Metafaculty** - Darklord's may or may not allow their selves to be found with this power. However, they are not allowed to send misleading information about their location, they may either hide it or reveal it.

**Astral Construct IX** - As astral construct I.

**Genesis** - This power can only be used while the manifester is in the misty border. Any attempt to manifest it inside another domain (i.e. using the antigenesis version of the power) not only fails, but also requires a dark powers check, AND alerts the Darklord that someone has made such an attempt. The "demiplane" created by use of this power is just as the manifester wishes it to be, but it strangely dark and perverse. If the manifester is evil, the "demiplane" becomes a new domain of its own (an Island of Terror in the mists) and the PC the Darklord.

**Astral Projection** - This power works as the spell of the same name.

**Probability Travel** - Unlike astral projection, this power does not work in Ravenloft because it

allows actually physically leaving the demiplane rather than through an astral body. It does, however, allow the user to travel about in the misty border in an ethereal, ghost like form. It still does not allow the user to cross a sealed domain border.

**Time Regression** - This power allows the manifester to undo an act that caused him/her to fail a dark powers check. However...doing so does not remove the effects of the failed check. Example - Brell the psion impetuously defiles a holy site, and then realizes that such an act might attract the attention of the dark powers. The DM causes him to immediately roll a dark powers check (or rolls one in secret) which he fails. Brell manifests this power and in his regression does not defile the holy site. The dark powers check remains failed, however...and whatever dark gift/curse has been bestowed upon Brell remains in effect...though it is likely that only Brell and the dark powers will know of his deed.

**Confidant** - As mindlink,

**Microcosm** - Use of this power does not constitute mental contact.

**Psychic Chirurgery** - Use of this power constitutes mental contact.

**Thrall** - Use of this power on an unwilling target (as it is likely to be used) requires a dark powers check. It does not, however, constitute mental contact.

## New Psionic Feats

**Soothing Thoughts**- You have gone through extensive training in dealing with insane minds. You receive a +4 natural bonus to any madness saves you are forced to make after contacting an insane mind. This bonus does not apply to recovery checks that you must subsequently make as a result of a failed madness save from such mental contact. This is especially handy for users of psionic powers, or arcane or divine spells who intend to treat the mental afflictions

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of the insane through contact of minds. This stacks with the bonus from the open mind feat, if you have that as well; though only when contacting or being contacted by insane minds.

**Thoughts of Darkness-** You are especially adept at using your powers to drive weak and feeble minds over the brink of madness. Whenever you use a psionic power in order to inflict madness, the target suffers a -2 penalty to the save. This also applies to any contact made with your mind that might constitute mental contact by a mind that to yours would be alien. Example : Benny the Illithid, who has taken the Thoughts of Darkness feat, is attacked by Brell the Psion via a psionic attack mode (lets say...ego whip). Brell must make a madness save for contacting an alien mind (he's never engaged an illithid in psionic combat before), and suffers a -2 penalty to the save due to Benny's exceptionally dark and depraved mind because of this feat.

## A better Illithid-

If you are anything like me (and you must be, because you are reading this) you love Illithids. They are just...neat. Anyhoo, I was severely disappointed with the Illithid presented in the Monster Manual. For one thing...they not only lacked infravision, but they lacked any method of seeing in the dark at all! So, either we are to accept that there are scores of Illithids stumbling about in the absolute darkness of the Underdark, or they are toting about torches or lanterns. Something about that just didn't seem right.

It's just as well that they got rid of infravision in 3rd edition, but taking it away from the Illithid removed a great deal of their charm. Why else would they wish to extinguish (or re-channel) the sun, unless it severely hindered their powers? With all these things in mind, I've made a better Illithid, one I find more suited to Ravenloft, as well as all other planes. I've used information from The Illithiad, as well as my own sick mind. The ceremorph template

is also included, as it's a great blast to ceremorph all sorts of things and send them after the PCs (my favorite is the Doppellthid, a ceremorphed doppelganger).

## Illithid

### Medium-Size Aberration (Illithidkin)

**Hit Dice:** 8d8+8 (44 hp)  
**Initiative:** +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)  
**Speed:** 30 ft. Swim 20 ft.  
**AC:** 15 (12 touch, 13 flat-footed)  
**Attacks:** 4 tentacles +8 melee  
**Damage:** Tentacle 1d4+1 acid  
**Face/Reach:** 5 ft., by 5 ft./5 ft.  
**Special Att.:** Mind Blast, psionics, improved grab, extract  
**Special Qualities:** SR 25, PR 15, telepathy, infravision  
**Saves:** Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +9  
**Abilities:** Str 12, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 19, Wis 17, Cha 17

**Skills:** Bluff +8, Concentration +12, Hide +8, Intimidate +10, Psicraft +9, Knowledge: Psionics +9, Listen +10, Move Silently +7, Spot +10

**Feats:** Alertness, Combat Manifestation, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse (tentacle)

**Climate/Terrain:** Any underground

**Organization:** Solitary, pair, inquisition (3-5), or cult (3-5 plus 6-10 underlings)

**Challenge Rating:** 10

**Treasure:** Double Standard

**Alignment:** Usually lawful evil

**Advancement:** By character class (favored class Psion)

**Mind Blast (Ps):** As the psionic power of the same name, though this is usable at will by the Illithid. The DC to resist this power is equal to 10 + the ½ Illithid's HD + its Cha modifier. An Illithid who is also a psionic user need not spend PSP to use this power, though they must do so if they wish to empower it with any metapsionic feats, but they must only pay the listed

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additional cost. This power does 1d4 Cha damage against psionic using creatures. Against non-psionic using creatures the effect is different: the victim is stunned for 3d4 rounds. The power affects a cone of 60 ft, and it is important to note that Illithid are NOT immune to the mind blasts of other illithid.

**Psionics (Ps):** At will – astral projection, charm monster, detect thoughts, levitate, plane shift, and suggestion. These abilities are as powers manifested by a psion of equal level to the illithid's HD, regardless of class. The DC to resist is equal to 10 + power level + it's Cha modifier.

**Infravision (Ex):** Illithid see exclusively in infrared light. As a result, they can perceive anything that reflects or absorbs heat with nearly as much detail as visual light would allow. However, they are severely limited by bright light, and as such prefer to spend most of their time in the dark. Their range of sight depends on the amount of visible light present: darkness/starlight = 480 ft., candle/moonlight = 240 ft., torchlight = 120 ft., lantern/magical light = 60 ft., light on a cloudy day/well-lit indoors = 30 ft., direct sunlight = 15 ft. Seeing into the infrared spectrum allows them to see invisible creatures, so they are effectively immune to invisibility. However, anything incorporeal ceases to register with their sight, making ghosts and other matter-less creatures invisible to them (50% miss chance). Corporeal undead present another problem: while these creatures do absorb heat, they do not reflect it and as such are more difficult for the illithid to see. Any corporeal undead creatures are considered to have three-quarters concealment (30% miss chance) and receive a +10 to all Hide checks against an Illithid. As a result of this handicap, Illithid detest all undead creatures, especially Illthi-liches (the Alhoon).

## Ceremorph Template

The ceremorph template can be applied to any living, corporeal creature. The creature's

type becomes aberration, but the subtype ceremorph/illithidkin is added. Undead can become ceremorphs as well, but the ceremorph template must be added to the creature prior to becoming undead; once it dies the Illithid are unable to ceremorph the creature.

When a creature is "ceremorphed", it loses all class levels it has and reverts back to a base creature for its level. For example, an 8th level Elf fighter is ceremorphed by her Illithid captors. When this occurs, she loses all class levels and abilities and becomes a 1 HD elf. The only exception to this are physical ability scores, which remain the same (see the abilities section of the template).

**Hit Dice:** Changes to d8, but the amount remains the same.

**Speed:** Same as base creature

**AC:** Same as base creature

**Attacks:** The ceremorph retains all the attacks of the base creature. It also gains the extract ability, usable through one of its base attacks (usually a bite or grapple). The extract attack is described in the Special Attacks section of the template.

**Damage:** As base creature

**Special Attacks:** The ceremorph retains all the special attacks of the base creature, and gains the following:

**Extract (Ex):** A ceremorph that secures a grapple on an opponent and successfully maintains a hold for one round may extract the targets brain. It does this by secreting a flesh and bone-dissolving enzyme from glands in the ceremorph's body, usually the mouth.

**Psionics (Sp):** At will – astral projection, charm monster, detect thoughts, levitate, plane shift, and suggestion. These abilities are as spells cast by an 8th-level psion (save DC 10 + Wis modifier + power level).

**Mind Blast (Su):** This is a cone attack 60 feet long. Anyone caught in this cone must succeed at a Will save (DC 17) or be stunned for 3d4 rounds. Psions or psionic using creatures (including other ceremorphs) instead take 1d4



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temporary Charisma damage.

**Special Qualities:** The ceremorph retains all the special qualities of the base creature, and gains the following if it didn't have them already:

**Infravision:** Unlike darkvision and low-light vision, ceremorphs actually see in infrared light. This causes a very high sensitivity to visible light, but manifests as a very powerful form of darkvision. The ceremorph can see anything that produces or absorbs or reflects heat, which amounts to anything material or energy. Their range of sight depends on the amount of visible light present: darkness/starlight = 480 ft., candle/moonlight = 204 ft., torchlight = 120 ft., lantern/magical light = 60 ft., light on a cloudy day/well-lit indoors = 30 ft., direct sunlight = 15 ft. The ceremorph, like the illithid, prefers complete darkness.

**Telepathy (Su):** The ceremorph can communicate telepathically with any creature that has a language, with a range of 100 ft.

**Spell Resistance (Su):** The ceremorph as spell resistance of 25. If the psionics are different variation on the rules is used, this amounts to power resistance of 15.

**Saves:** as an aberration of the same level.

**Abilities:** As base creature, though the ceremorph's Int becomes 19, and its Wis and Cha become 17. The creature also gains a +2 to its initial Str and Con scores, and a +4 to Dex; unless the base creature is immobile in which case it's Dex remains the same.

**Skills:** The ceremorph loses any skills it had in life, but retains the racial bonuses of the base creature. It also gains the following racial bonuses: Bluff +7, Concentration +11, Hide +6, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (any two) +5, Listen +8, Move Silently +5, and Spot +8. The ceremorph also gains the ability to write and read illithid Qualiths, as well as whatever other knowledge and skills the Illithid God brain wish to pass on to this particular ceremorph.

**Feats:** The ceremorph loses all class based or level dependent feats, but retains all the racial feats of the base creature and gains the following: Alertness, Combat Manifestation, Dodge, and Improved Initiative.

**Challenge Rating:** +7

**Alignment:** Always lawful evil.

The Illithid create ceremorphs by implanting a mature illithid tadpole into the ear (or similar opening to the brain) of a living creature. Traditionally, only human and human-sized quadrupeds work for this procedure. However, the Illithid in Ravenloft has experienced great success in the field of biomancy. As such, any number of creatures may be ceremorphed, at the discretion of the DM. Typically, the less like medium sized humanoid the subject is, the less likely the procedure is to work. The creature to be ceremorphed can be no larger than huge, and no less than small in size categories.



# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## SHOCK, SPARK AND ROAR

### A COMPENDIUM OF LIGHTNING AND THUNDER SPELLS

By Luiz Eduardo Neves Peret (Lord Arijani)

A list of sparking and thundering spells recovered from a lost druid. Wizard and sorcerer versions are also available.

To my Esteemed Brothers of the Fraternity Cell in Richemulot:

*As we all know, mankind has always been fascinated with natural phenomena, especially with those that come down from the sky and have flashy, noisy effects, such as lightning and thunder. Regardless of any possible harmful effects they cause – and these particular phenomena are unequivocal to do so – men always look up to the skies in awe, and some ancient, less enlightened cultures refer to lightning and thunder as “the sparkling eyes and roaring voices of the Gods”.*

*Despite all this, it has come to my attention that an amazingly low number of magical effects deal with this fascinating energy that is Electricity, in comparison with other elemental-related forces such as Fire, Ice and Wind, and even if we consider the immense variety of spells that dwell into the power of Sound.*

*On the other hand, we at the Great University of Tvashtri, have been studying the mysteries of lightning for quite some time, and we have seen some absolutely charming side effects of lightning strikes and their like, such as the appearance of apparently independent sparks in locations away from the site of the*

*strike, new (and mostly foul) odors spreading from said site, physical reactions of various degrees in the environment around it, and even a major, if transient, change in the very essence of matter, as ordinary metal can become magnetized and hard rock may suddenly turn into a transparent matter as brittle as glass, for a limited amount of time.*

*In the best interest of our Fraternity, I made a point to gather as much as I could of information on the exquisite nature of Electricity.*

*Quite by (should I say “fortunate”?) coincidence, after a particularly heavy rainstorm that afflicted the region south of Tvashtri for three days, a band of hunters have found the half-burnt remains of a woman, obviously not from our land. She had red hair and her clothes were plain and simple. In life, she must have been a beautiful woman in her late 20s or early 30s.*

*She had few possessions other than a personal journal, which the hunters have generously delivered into our hands. After careful translation of its contents, I have determined that the woman was a member of a secret group of nature-oriented spellcasters – I believe the word in your language is “druid” – who live in the land of Forlorn, in the Core. Apparently, she was on a mission to find some rare herb in the northern areas of the continent, miles away from her home, and her last journal entries refer to a bank of mists surrounding her as she was collecting samples of frozen algae in the cold land of Lamordia, and she suddenly finding herself transported to our warm jungles.*

*Even though the woman was not skilled in scientific terminology, her understanding of nature seems quite remarkable, and her descriptions of the magical effects she was able to create are detailed and accurate. It is a really*

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*a pity that she was caught in the area of her own Rod of Lightning. Examining her corpse, I have found evidence that she was held by some other, unknown agent, and was unable to flee her own spell, being struck by a bolt of lightning. Quite ironic, I find it.*

*While I have been unable to fully grasp some of the lore collected, I am sending this short compendium to you anyway, in the hopes that, with your available resources and enlightened minds, you may develop a deeper understanding of its essence. I am still translating other parts of the original text, related to more mundane matters and to other spells and effects, and have taken the liberty of inserting a few comments of my own, after each translated passage.*

*You will notice that some of the effects described were not spells carried by the druid, but instead have been observed and carefully registered during her voyages. She must have shared my own interest for electric effects. Unfortunately, even her was not able to understand some of the most powerful effects she witnessed, and her report looks rather incomplete. I am still trying to find some more accurate descriptions in her text and compare them with other works I have seen on this subject, so that there might be – if you pardon my word games – other sparks of knowledge still to be uncovered.*

*Hoping to have helped to improve our cause, if only a little further, I humbly subscribe myself, your faithful servant*

Prof. Dr. Dhurban Ananda  
Professor of Ancient  
Languages  
Great University of  
Tvashtri

\*\*\*\*\*

*Spells mentioned and/or described in the Journal of the Druid Sherlyn Redleaf:*

*0-level:*

**Sparks:** creates cloud of foul-smelling, electrically charged gas, causing 1 point of damage, and may keep vampires at bay.

*1st – level:*

**Shocking Arc:** you can send an arc of lightning to one target/level, dealing 1d4 damage and trapping them.

*2nd – level:*

**Electromagnetic Seeds:** seeds attract metallic objects and hinder movement in armor.

**Thundering Weapon:** enchants a non-magical weapon with thundering special ability.

*3rd – level:*

**Theodora's Electrostatic Sphere:** ball of wool becomes electric bomb, damage 2d4 +1/level (max. +10), creates gas cloud similar to Sparks effect.

**Weaken Metal or Stone:** softens metallic and stone objects, turning them brittle.

*4th – level:*

**Electric Shield:** electric field deals 1d6 + 1/level damage to attackers and protects against lightning.

**Shocking Weapon:** enchants a non-magical weapon with shock special ability.

*5th – level:*

**Lightning Breath:** you can spit a line of lightning, deals 6d8 damage.

**Rod of Lightning:** metallic rod acts as focus for Call Lightning spell.

*6th – level:*

**Globe of Lightning:** as Electric Shield, but covers one creature/level for a longer period.

**Disrupt Metal:** Electric charge dispels metallic cohesion, dissolving and causing damage.

*7th – level:*

**Lightning Mines:** mines burst dealing 2d4 lightning damage per mine, one mine per level (max. 20).

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**Lightning Storm:** lightning strikes cause 1d6/level (max. 20d6) to all creatures and acts as a Shout spell.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Disrupt Metal

### Transmutation [Electricity]

**Level:** Drd6

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./ 2 levels)

Effect: ray

Duration: see text.

Saving Throw: See text

Spell Resistance: Yes

*The warrior advanced towards the helpless boy with a menacing expression, his sword high and ready to strike. With the agility of a squirrel, I climbed a nearby tree, unnoticed, then I changed back. Even though I did not know those people and their strange ways, I knew that the underfed youth was no match for the strong, armored man. I also knew it was not the boy's fault that his family had nothing to eat and that he had to steal loaves of bread to sustain them.*

*So I acted quickly, chanting for the Gods of the Sky to help me strike true. When the warrior was about to hit the lad, my bolt of lightning dissolved his armor and sword at once, sending him away screaming, his bones shaking, his hair all up, his teeth clenched and his face distorted in pain. The sight of his burned underclothes appearing among the remains of his armor as he ran away was almost laughable.*

*No one noticed whence the bolt had come, so I was sure that my action would not attract unwanted attention from any of those hawk-tattooed soldiers. Easy as it might have been to simply fulminate the man with a weaker spell, I did not want him dead, just wanted to teach him a lesson. Besides, I had learned that the death of one of those evil warriors would bring certain doom to the entire community as a response. So foolish men are, in their need to show their power through oppression!*

*DA's Notes: Here we have a good measure of this druid's power over the elements. This bolt of lightning did not come from the skies as one might expect from a druid spell, but instead acts similar to a regular, arcane lightning bolt spell. However, it seems altered somehow, being more centered in metallic destruction than killing.*

### Spell Effect

By means of this spell you can make a ranged touch attack per round, against a single metallic object, or metallic-covered area, up to a 5-foot-radius volume. Any metallic object or creature hit by this spell must make a Fortitude save or suffer 1d6 points of damage per caster level (max. 20d6). Success indicates half damage.

This damage is caused by the disruption of the electric field that bind metallic particles together, and is not considered electric damage for purposes of metallic constructs, items or creatures that might be healed or otherwise unaffected by electric spells and effects. Its disruptive nature also ignores object hardness.

The affected metallic matter quickly dissolves into primary metallic particles. A creature in physical contact with the metal, as when wearing metallic armor or carrying a sword, suffers half of the damage dealt to the metal, as electric damage. A successful Reflex save halves this damage, but there are situations when such save is not possible (as in the case of armor worn by the creature).

## Electric Shield

### Evocation [Electricity]

**Level:** Drd4, Sor/Wiz4

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: 1 round/level (D)

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

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*As I quickly approached the site of the combat in search for survivors, I could hear human sounds from the nearby trees, and knew at once that the raiders were still there, hiding but not silent. I immediately took a pinch of powdered silver from my pouch and sprinkled it on my hair. I knew the magic I was conjuring would steal the cover of night from me, but I thought it worth the risk.*

*As the first sparks of lightning surrounded me, the first brigand jumped from a tree, trying to take me from my horse to the ground. We both fell and I could feel a sharp pain as his dagger hit my shoulder. The bandit, however, didn't have time to savor his success, as my enchanted aura burned his hair and skin with a stroke of lightning.*

*He apparently learned his lesson, as his friends also seemed to know better than to face a nature's guardian in combat, for they all fled the scene, my attacker still limping and moaning. I braced myself and chanted a curative spell, then I proceeded to see if there were survivors in need of assistance.*

**DA's Note:** While this spell provides no particular protection against physical attacks, it strikes back at the aggressor and, according to the druid's other notes, is quite useful against lightning-based attacks.

## Spell Effect

This spell surrounds you with an aura of electric sparks. Any creature that hits you in melee combat deals normal damage, but receives a wave of electric energy which deals 1d6 points of damage + 1 point per caster level (max. +20). The shield also grants an extra protection: if hit with a lightning-based attack, you suffer only half damage, and if the attack allows for a Reflex save, you take no damage on a successful save. The shield provides half the illumination of a normal torch (10 feet).

Material Component: a pinch of powdered silver.

## Electromagnetic Seeds

### Transmutation [Electricity]

**Level:** Drd2, Rng2

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: Up to three seeds

Duration: 1 round/level (D, see text)

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates (object, see text)

Spell Resistance: Yes (object)

*"You, there!" the man shouted at me, "This inn has no vacancies, and we do not want your kind here!" I turned slowly, trying to conceal my anger. I had been walking for several hours and, as much as I wanted to stay in the forest, my feeling of being constantly watched and the howls of unnatural, corrupted wolves in the distance had made me decide otherwise. As the innkeeper had already accepted my payment and the house was visibly near empty, it was not an ignorant patron that would make me leave the tavern. I needed food and rest.*

*I saw it was a man clad in chain armor who had talked to me – or rather, barked at me. I knew he was not a native, but probably a hired mercenary paid to keep peace in this town. He wasn't doing a good job. I didn't know him – and he obviously didn't know me.*

*I said: "What do you know of my... kind? I don't want to pick a fight, I just want to eat and sleep, and by the morning I'll be gone" He grabbed his sheathed sword and shouted "Then be gone now! I need not know who you are to know you are a stranger here, and I don't want you around!" "Well", I said "I see you can talk loud to a woman, with your hand on your sword. But you should not be so quickly to trust the might of the blade." While I said that, I took a few seeds from my pouch, then I quickly whispered my incantation and threw them at him.*

*The seeds locked his sword in its metal and leather scabbard. When he noticed that the*

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*sword was stuck, he tried to run to me, but his chain armor was unwilling to cooperate. He slowly approached the counter, only to see, gasping in horror, that every knife and fork on the nearby tables started to shake and fly, harmlessly stabbing at him. He tried to run, screaming, but still the armor didn't let him. When the innkeeper butchering knives began to move, I called off the spell, letting them fall to the ground just a few inches of him. I approached the trembling man and said "Now I presume I can stay here for the night, no?" He did not respond, but his eyes were as good an answer as I ever wanted.*

**DA's Note:** This is quite an interesting spell, indeed! While unable to cause direct damage, it may greatly impair the advancement of an armored opponent at close quarters, or cause some unexpected situations if used in an environment full of metallic objects, such as a blacksmith shop or a kitchen.

## Spell Effect

You transmute up to three seeds, charging them with an electromagnetic current. They stay inert for a full round (giving you time to throw them, with a range increment of 10 feet), then the current discharges in a spiral wave that attracts all metallic objects within a 10-foot radius of the seed. The seed can attract (or be attracted to) a total of 25 pounds of metal, in a single piece (as a set of armor or a shield) or divided into several smaller objects (as knives, pans etc.). If attached to armor being worn, the wearer suffers the effects of the Slow spell, unless he succeeds in a Fortitude save. If the save is successful, the seed can still attract up to 20 pounds of metal to the wearer. Small weapons attracted to the seed receive an attack roll at the caster's ranged attack bonus with a -5 penalty, and cause normal damage, without any bonuses except for enhancement and magical bonuses, if any.

Material Component: a bit of powdered iron and up to three seeds.

## Globe of Lightning

### Evocation [Electricity]

**Level:** Drd6, Sor/Wiz6

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Area: 10-ft-radius spherical emanation.

Duration: 1 minute/level (D)

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

*The streets and alleys of Port-a-Lucine were more dangerous than I first had noticed. Once again we saw ourselves surrounded by enemies in large numbers. As my feline new friends unsheathed weapons and prepared to fight, I quickly blew my powdered silver over our heads, asking the Gods of the Sky for protection. We knew we were outnumbered, and the blue glow surrounding each of us served to give me a fair estimation of our enemies' numbers. As the first bandit came to strike at young Miette, she boldly jumped backwards, but was hit by the tip of her attacker's rapier. Fortunately for her, the enemy was struck down by the magical shield's bolt of lightning, buying her some time to recover.*

**DA's Notes:** This seems to be a variation of the Electric Shield spell, previously mentioned, with the obvious advantage of protecting a number of allies instead of the caster only.

## Spell Effect

As Electric Shield, except that the Globe covers a 10-foot-radius as an emanation, protecting creatures chosen within it by the caster, up to a maximum of one creature/level, and its duration is longer.

## Lightning Breath

### Conjuration [Electricity]

**Level:** Drd5, Sor/Wiz6

Components: V, S, M.

Casting Time: 1 full round

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Area: 5 ft. wide line

Duration: 1 round/level (see below)



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Saving Throw: Reflex half  
Spell Resistance: Yes.

*When I was young, Shellaugh told me a story of a mighty wizard who once came to our land. He was wise, but too fond of destruction for my master's tastes. He always donned a sky-blue robe with stars and a black overcoat, which he said was a symbol of his arcane order. He and Shellaugh recognized each other's might and, while not exactly friends nor allies, helped each other for the time he lived among my people.*

*This man told Shellaugh countless tales of a distant land whence he had come, where winged, intelligent giant lizards ruled and humanoids cowed in fear and awe. He said that no mortal magic was match for those lizard's power, but sometimes one of those godlike creatures would take a few chosen ones as apprentices and teach them the secrets of the elements. When Shellaugh obviously did not believe his words, he invited her to battle some of the dread goblins who blight our lands, so that he could show her the power one of those lizards had taught him to control.*

*As they met our hated enemies, he proved his point, by breathing forth a bolt of lightning from his very mouth, which easily incinerated the beasts! My master was astounded, and even more when he revealed to her that his monstrous master was able to throw up even more powerful bolts, as naturally as we breathe.*

*I never knew that man, and never knew if his tales were true, but in fact, Shellaugh learned how to breathe lightning, and she passed on the knowledge to me.*

**DA's Note:** This particularly mighty variation of the Lightning Bolt spell was said to have been taught to a human wizard by a powerful, winged lizard-like creature from a place now lost to memory. Whether or not this is true, legend tells that the creature could naturally breathe such powerful bolts of lightning and, being itself immune to lightning, taught this spell to a

*servant wizard in order to give them a fighting chance against the monster's enemies without risking his master's safety. A wise flying lizard, who would ever tell?*

## Spell Effect

For the duration of the spell, you can conjure a line of 5-foot wide line of lightning, coming out of your mouth, once per round as a full-round action (needs concentration). The line of lightning causes 6d8hp of damage (half on a successful Reflex save) sets fire to combustible and damages objects in its path.

If you decide not to breathe in a particular round within the maximum duration, you can take other actions, but if you cast another spell the Lightning Breath is terminated.

Material Component: a bit of fleece or wool and a scale from a lizard.

## Lightning Mines

### Transmutation [Electricity]

**Level:** Drd7, Sor/Wiz6

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: One metallic item/level (max 20)

Duration: 2 hours/level or until discharged (D)

Saving Throw: Reflex half (see text)

Spell Resistance: Yes.

*I was prepared to fight to the death with the foul goblins if need be, but my wise master Shellaugh didn't want to waste more time with the creatures. The next morning, at the morning prayers, she taught me a new prayer I did not know of. Then she decided to move around the field, and she told me to bring along the remains of the dead warrior's shattered sword we had found a few days before. She told me it was time for a new lesson on how to make use of otherwise futile metallic remains.*

*We had come to the head of a narrow path between two hills, when Shellaugh took a dozen of those steel shards and enchanted them with the incantation I did not know of yet. She*

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*motioned for me to do the same, then we scattered the shards along the path in groups of threes and fours, and buried them with dirt.*

*With our job done, she taught me the secret word to deactivate the magic temporarily, and we ran back to meet our foes, a handful of ghastly, leering goblins. As they detected us, two seemingly defenseless druid women wandering through the awful “cleared ground” they had opened the night before, they immediately stopped felling trees and came running after us.*

*We both ran in the direction of the path, and as Shellaugh had instructed me, we both took the wings of hawks and flew low, right over the enchanted shards. The accursed creatures ran right through them, though, receiving a full charge of lightning sparks. Trembling and screaming, the first two fell, and the three following fell over on their bodies, setting off the rest of the charges.*

*“No more ‘cleared ground’ today, monsters”, whispered my master as we returned to our human forms on the top of the hill. “Now go tell the others of your kind that we are prepared to respond to their unholy crimes against the land”. As if they had heard her, the foul creatures left the area, returning to whatever pit they had come from.*

**DA’s Note:** *Once again, a remarkable display of cunning on the part of these Forlornian druids. To trigger mere shards of metal to act as electric explosives is a handy and clever use of disposable material.*

## Spell Effect

With this spell you electrically charge 1-inch metallic plates (such as medals, coins or shards of a broken sword) or spheres (as lead bullets), up to a maximum of one item per level. The item must then be buried in one inch of dry land. One round after the item has been covered with earth, it cannot be touched again or will discharge unless the creature knows the password.

Consider that each item functions under the same conditions of the Alarm spell but covers only a 5 foot-diameter centered on it. Up to five mines can be concentrated in a single 5-foot-diameter area. Speaking the password, any creature can step on the area protected by a lightning mine. In a wide area covered with several mines, the creature must speak the password once before crossing each 5-foot area. It is not necessary to speak the password once per mine within the same 5-foot area.

If a creature crosses the area or steps on it without speaking the correct password, each mine explodes, discharging 2d4 points of electric damage. For purposes of resistance, add the damage dealt by all discharged mines before applying the reduction. A successful Reflex save halves the damage inflicted. The spent mine melts away.

Material component: metallic items to be charged, and a bit of wool or fleece.

## Lightning Storm

### Evocation [Electricity]

**Level:** Drd7, Sor/Wiz6

Components: V, S, DF/M

Casting Time: 1 full round

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Area: Two 10-foot cubes/level (spread)

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Reflex half (see text)

Spell Resistance: Yes.

*The monsters, which had dominated the bandit guild, finally showed their faces. Handsome humans with feral expressions and long fangs, they still managed to hold some sinister charm.*

*That was when, much to my horror, I realized that my friend Agatha’s previous encounter with the beasts had more consequences than we had thought. As soon as the first creature approached our group, a mere look into his eyes was enough, and the powerful warrior dropped her rapier, letting herself exposed to the monster’s dripping fangs.*



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*I had to think fast. Trusting my friend's natural resistance to magic and her ability to jump out of most dangers, I unleashed a thundering storm of lightning into the alley. The effect was devastating. The monsters, which were not undead but really looked like vampires, fled the scene screaming in pain, some claspng their hands on their bleeding ears. At least two creatures fell, their bodies fulminated by lightning and still trembling from the thunder effect.*

*Of course, such a powerful spell did carry detrimental side effects: from all over the alley, windows shattered and shards of broken glass showered on us all, friend and foe alike. I just prayed that my friend Agatha had come back to her senses in the last minute and took shelter from the falling glass.*

**DA's Note:** *I have been told that this spell is a variation of the already documented divine spell Fire Storm, for those dedicated to lightning-related magic, with the advantage that sorcerers and wizards can learn it. Also, the thunder causes a terrible side effect to all those able to hear it, as well as to crystalline objects.*

## Spell Effect

The area encompassed by this spell is instantly filled by a massive spread of lightning and thunder. The lightning does not affect plant matter if you so desire. Any other creatures (and any plant creatures you wish to affect) suffer 1d6 points of electric damage per caster level (maximum 20d6, Reflex save halves the damage). The thundering roar of the lightning causes additional effects, as per the Shout spell (see description of that spell in the PHB, page 252, for more information).

Arcane Material Component: a bit of fleece or wool.

## Rod of Lightning

**Transmutation [Electricity]**

**Level: Drd5**

Components: V, S, F

Casting Time: 10 minutes

Range: See text

Area: 90-foot radius from rod

Duration: See text

Saving Throw: Reflex half

Spell Resistance: Yes

*"A sword?!" I gasped, "how are you going to use a sword against all those goblins? It is not one of our weapons, you cannot use it! And besides, it is rusted and worn out, anyway! What good will this piece of metal be fore us?" Shellaugh smiled at my juvenile impatience and simply said "Sometimes a sword serves another purpose, even as a weapon. Be patient and see, young one."*

*She concentrated for a while on that fanciful weapon we had collected from one of the goblins' most recent victims, and I thought she was trying to divine something about the sword's owner or history. Gray and purplish clouds were gathering, announcing that surely another storm would begin at any moment, and I was feeling the whipping wind on my face. My master seemed not to notice the wind and moisture, or rather to enjoy the feeling very much.*

*After a while, she reopened her eyes, and an expression of determination was clear. She said "Our enemies will camp near the broken wagons, to collect what they can. Let's give them a surprise."*

*She then moved, the sword hanging from her left hand in an awkward position, which reminded me once more how she disliked those mundane weapons. The sickle was her blade, as much as it was mine, no doubt about that.*

*We approached the raided camp cautiously, and she brought the sword near the maggot-riddled corpse of its owner. "This way they will not suspect a thing", she said, looking at me with a sad smile, "not that they are so bright, anyway."*

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*She drove the sword through the soft earth near the corpse, in a vertical position. Placing her hand over the blade, she intoned a final chant while I muttered a prayer for the unfortunate victims there. “We shall see that they are properly buried, as soon as we have their revenge”, she told me, as if she had listened to my thoughts.*

*We left, and stood watch from the hill. About one hour later, the foul creatures arrived, returning from their chase after the survivors. They entered the wagons and began to throw out whatever they found. One of them came near the sword, extended his clawed hand to grab it. I could feel Shellaugh’s breath faltering for a moment, as if she expected something to happen and the creature was going to disturb it.*

*Then thunder rumbled, but no rain poured down. Instead, a bolt of lightning suddenly struck down the goblin, pretty much fulminating it. The others jumped and screamed, running back and forth. After a few moments, they began to approach the wagons once again, but then another bolt struck hard one of them. The others were surprised – and I must admit I was, too. I knew the effects of lightning-summoning magic, but had never witnessed a druid call the rage of the skies through a focus. And what focus! I saw as another goblin was hit, but survived. The unfortunate creature crawled slowly away from the spot, just to be hit once again a few minutes later.*

*“Now, young one, we wait”, she said. “There will be more lightning, until all of them have been put down or the spell has run its course. Unfortunately, there might be more destruction before it ends, but those poor people will have no use for their gear in the afterlife.”*

**DA’s Note:** Developed, no doubt, by a rather sneaky druid, this spell is a more “portable” and “programmable” version of the already documented Call Lightning spell, or so I have been told. For what I have read, it seems to be popular in the gloomy land of Forlorn.

## Spell Effect

This spell was designed to imitate the effects of the Call Lightning spell, without the need for the caster to be present. You enchant a straight, metallic rod (which may be a pole, iron fence or sword blade) at the moment of casting, programming it to discharge the spell at some specific moment within the maximum duration of one hour per caster level. It then must be placed somewhere under the open sky in a stormy area, as per the conditions detailed under Call Lightning (PHB page 182). At the predetermined moment, the spell discharges one bolt of lightning every ten minutes, at a random round, causing 1d10 points of electric damage per caster level (maximum 10d10). The bolts concentrate over a circular area of 90-foot radius from the rod, aiming on any living creature in the area, going first after bipedal creatures, then striking animals and finally including trees and objects (if there are enough bolts). No creature is targeted more than once, unless the creature moves more than 5 feet from the point where the lightning has struck before. The rod itself is never struck, but any creature touching it is the immediate target of the bolts, which may, in this case, hit this same creature more than once.

This spell has the obvious advantage of not needing the caster in the area. Also, the rod does not need to be stormy at the moment of casting, but must meet the proper conditions by the time the spell is discharged, otherwise it does not work and is wasted. Another disadvantage is that the caster does not choose the targets for the bolts, and even the caster is a suitable target. If the caster can retrieve the rod after the spell ends, it can be re-used.

Focus: a metallic rod, pole or blade, of 1 foot or more in length.

## Shocking Arc

### Evocation [Electricity]

**Level:** Drd1, Sor/Wiz1

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Close (25ft. + 5ft./2 levels)

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Target: One creature/level, all no more than 15ft. apart

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

Saving Throw: Fortitude half (see text)

Spell Resistance: Yes

targeted again the next round, before suffering the damage.

Material Component: a bit of wool, fleece, fur or similar material.

*I remember the first time I used this spell. A small band of goblins had ambushed us and I had little time to think. I grabbed a piece of wool from my own clothes and chanted the incantation just as one of those foul creatures advanced to me. It was almost funny, to see that mocking open-mouthed smile disappear in clenched teeth, as a spark of lightning jumped from my hand and chained the monster, then jumped to the next, from him to a third one and so forth. The creatures were static, shaking hard while I kept my chant, until one of them finally blew up in a gory explosion. This gave time for my companions to gather their wits again and fight.*

**DA's Note:** *This is a very useful spell for beginners, as it has a wider range than other offensive spells of the same level of power, but it has the drawback of requiring full concentration from the caster. When dealing with weaker enemies, however, it may be worth the risk.*

## Spell Effect

As you rub the material component in one hand, your body is charged with natural electricity and surrounded by sparks of lightning. This effect is harmless to you, but you can produce an arc of lightning that hits up to one target within range per level, as long as no two of them are more than 15 feet apart from each other. Each target suffers 1d4 points of electric damage per round while you concentrate on keeping the spell. A successful Fortitude save indicates that the target has suffered half damage and is free to leave the area. A failed save indicates that the target is trapped in the arc. Subjects trapped by the arc can only take partial actions and suffer a -2 circumstance penalty to Dexterity, AC, attack and weapon damage, but they can try another save each round. Those who succeeded but decided stay within range can be

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## Shocking Weapon

### Transmutation [Electricity]

**Level:** Drd4, Sor/Wiz4

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: One creature or non-magical weapon

Duration: 1 round/level (D)

Saving Throw: Reflex negates (harmless, object)

Spell Resistance: Yes.

*Miette had her bow ready, but I knew her arrows would do little to the monsters. So I quickly took a piece of my woolen robe and rubbed it on her bow, while muttering my spell, asking the Gods of the Sky for help. Miette was surprised when she began to shoot and it looked as if she were shooting lightning instead of arrows. It is good to know that I can still surprise my friends.*

**DA's Note:** This quite useful spell apparently bestows on a selected weapon the ability to cause lightning damage. Curiously, according to her description, even though the caster uses the weapon as the focus of the spell, not the ammunition, it apparently does affect both the weapon and the ammunition!

### Spell Effect

This spell enables you to confer the shock special ability to any non-magical weapon you touch. This ability causes 1d6 additional electric damage whenever the weapon scores a successful hit. Ranged weapons enchanted by this spell bestow the additional damage to their ammunition.

Conversely, you can touch a creature and give this creature's unarmed attacks the shock special ability. The creature is considered to have the Improved Unarmed Strike for the duration of the spell.

Material Component: a bit of wool or fleece to rub the weapon.

## Sparks

### Evocation [Electricity]

**Level:** Drd0, Rgr0, Sor/Wiz0

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25ft. + 5ft./2 levels)

Area: 20-foot radius

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: Fort negates (see text)

Spell Resistance: Yes

*I knew, by my own previous experiences, that the creature was somewhat resistant to lightning. Therefore I had to soften it a little. So I sent the cloud of sparks against it while it was battling my friends, confident that Agatha and Miette would resist my spell with ease. As the charges began to crack and pop, I quickly intoned the spell I had finally mastered with Theodora's help, and turned a ball of wool into an electric bomb, throwing it. The effects were just as I had predicted. Now I can say both Theodora and Shellaugh will be proud of me.*

**DA's Note:** Now, while this might seem a rather silly magical effect, it does have two interesting side effects: for one, the spell exudes a strong odor, similar to garlic, which, according to unconfirmed reports, might be useful to keep vampires and other garlic-sensitive creatures at bay; and, most important, the area stays slightly ionized for a short while, weakening the resistances of those within against other lightning-based attacks.

### Spell Effect

You point your finger at a direction and a cloud of highly charged gas fills the area of effect. The gas produces tiny electric sparks that deal 1 point of damage to any creatures within the area, for the duration of the spell. A successful Fortitude save negates the damage and prevents the subject from receiving any further damage from that spell (if a subject saves, then leaves the cloud and returns, she must roll a new save). However, all within the cloud suffer a -1 circumstance penalty to all saves against electricity- or lightning-based spells and effects.

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Material Component: a bit of wool, fleece, fur or similar material.

## Theodora's Electrostatic Sphere

### Transmutation [Electricity]

**Level:** Drd3, Sor/Wiz2

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Area: See text

Duration: 2 rounds or until discharged

Saving Throw: Reflex half (see text)

Spell Resistance: Yes

*My traveling companions were no ordinary women, and they soon showed me that. As we were on the road to Port-a-Lucine, a band of raiders came fast from the woods, trying to surround our wagon. The elder lady, who had been weaving and singing for most of the trip, took a ball of wool from her basket and, quickly chanting a spell, threw it at the midst of our attackers with such an accuracy as I did not expect from an old woman.*

*As it hit one of the horses, the ball exploded in a cloud of pure lightning, filling the air with a strong smell, similar to garlic. The horses were confused and some ran away, throwing their riders on the road. The four brigands were choking, the smell of burned flesh and hair mixing with the bluish gas cloud.*

*The younger woman jumped from the wagon, rapier in one hand and dagger in the other, seemingly unaffected by gas and ready to strike down our would-be attackers. As I carefully observed, her facial expression changed, her ears became pointed and furry and her teeth grew to a sinister snarl. She quickly dispatched two of the bandits and let the other two run away.*

*Later on, the elder explained to me their history and nature, and I understood that I had met the legendary Paka. I was surprised – and pleased – to see that my companions did not share their race's hatred for mankind, although*

*they certainly did share the fondness for bloodshed. After a while, I was able to duplicate the effects of that spell through my prayers, but kept the ball of wool as a component, out of respect for my new friend, a wise elder with a feline appreciation for balls of wool.*

**DA's Note:** Isn't it fascinating the attraction cats feel for balls of wool? Whatever the case, as you can see, this exotic spell is said to have been created by some form of feline shapeshifter, which the druid named "Paka". Perhaps my esteemed brothers may know more about such creatures.

### Spell Effect

You charge a ball of wool, turning it into a glowing sphere of electricity. The sphere can be hurled with a range increment of 30 feet. Upon hitting the target, it discharges a spherical 20-foot-radius cloud of electricity, dealing 2d4hp of damage, plus 1hp point per caster level (maximum 10hp). The cloud is filled with rancid-smelling vapors, and all living creatures within the area are nauseated for the duration of the spell. A successful Reflex save halves the damage and a Fortitude save (rolled independently) negates the nausea. Creatures wearing metallic armor inside the cloud suffer a –2 circumstance penalty to the Reflex save. As with other lightning-based spells, the gas produced has effects similar to garlic, and may affect garlic-sensitive creatures.

If hurled on a water surface, the sphere discharges a semi-spherical cloud only into the water, with double radius. Creatures inside or in contact (direct or through a metallic object) with the water receive a –2 circumstance penalty to the Reflex save.

Material Component: a ball of wool and a few hairs from any cat.

## Thundering Weapon

### Transmutation

**Level:** Drd2, Sor/Wiz2

Components: V, S, M



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Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: One creature or non-magical weapon

Duration: 1 round/level (D)

Saving Throw: Reflex negates (harmless, object)

Spell Resistance: Yes.

*As usual, Rackaj had his fists ready for action when the wererats attacked. Knowing how coward those foul creatures are, I decided to give him a better chance against the mob. Even though he usually frowns upon the use of magic for himself, just as much as he dislikes weapons, I could see that he felt rather proud and particularly threatening when, after I had rubbed his hands for a brief moment with a bit of wool, he could hear the low humming echoing from them. As he hit the creatures, they were stunned and at deafened. Considering the weight of his strike against the one who seemed to be the leader, it is possible that the monster will remain deaf forever. As I had thought, the confused beasts left the alley after a few blows.*

**DA's note:** *I was not aware of this, that one could enchant bare hands just as a weapon! Very imaginative use of a spell, and the roaring effect is certainly fearsome.*

## Spell Effect

This spell enables you to confer the thundering special ability to any non-magical weapon you touch. This ability causes 1d8 points of bonus sonic damage on a successful critical hit. Ranged weapons enchanted by this spell bestow the additional damage to their ammunition. If the weapon's critical multiplier is x3, add 2d8 points of sonic damage instead, and if the multiplier is x4, add 3d8 points. Subjects dealt a critical hit by a thundering weapon must make a Fortitude save (DC14) or be deafened permanently.

Conversely, you can touch a creature and give this creature's unarmed attacks the thundering special ability. The creature is considered to have the Improved Unarmed Strike for the duration of the spell.

Material Component: a bit of wool or fleece to rub the weapon.

## Weaken Metal or Stone

### Evocation [Electricity]

**Level:** Drd3, Rgr3

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: one non-magical metallic or stone object

Duration: 1 minute/level (D)

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

*The stone door fell too fast, sealing our way out. Miette was afraid of enclosed spaces – no doubt because of her bad experiences with prisons – and I could hear her normally purring breath become erratic and loud. Agatha slammed the door twice, to no avail.*

*"It is no use", she said, "the stone is too thick. Can't you do anything, sis?" But Sabryllia just looked at her, shaking her head, and answered with her well-known sarcastic humor: "My illusions are not that powerful, sister, that a stone wall will believe them". Then I had an idea. "Perhaps the door will not believe your illusions, but will yeald to my softening touch."*

*I rubbed my hands together and charged them with my spell. Motioning for Agatha to step aside – for I did not want to accidentally touch any of her so prized weapons – I rasped my hands twice against the solid stone. The third time I did it, chunks and small bits of stone began to fall from the door, as if it were turning to dust. "Quickly", I said, "this condition will not stay for long". A minute and a few blows with the pommel of her sword was all that Agatha needed, though.*

**DA's Note:** *Besides the effect described above, this spell is also perfect for those who must defend themselves against metallic weapons, or when they want to shape, carve and sculpt stones.*

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## Spell Effect

Your hands are covered by an unstable electric field that has weakening effects on metal and stone, turning them brittle. Any non-magic object touched while you are under the influence of this spell loses half of its hardness, and its break DC falls by 5. This condition lasts for the duration of the spell. Note that a touch attack against a weapon draws an attack of opportunity and it is you who must touch the weapon, not the other way around.



The Undead Sea Scrolls

People, good or bad...

Scientiae Arcanum



# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## THE ALBINO

### AN OUTCAST AMONG BEASTS

By: Andrew Snow

A unique albino werewolf from Verbrek, a black sheep (so to speak) in the werewolf community.

The two wolves slowly crept toward their helpless victim, the light of the full moon giving glimpses of their horrific and murderous visages. The long man could only close his eyes and wait for the end to come as the two unholy beasts prepared jump strike. That was when the poor man heard the sound of footsteps from behind him; he shot his head back to see a tall, heavily-muscled man with long white hair approaching, a strange axe flung over his shoulder.

"Thank Ezra you've come, you must save me!" The frightened prey cried out to the white-haired man.

"Out hunting again?" The white-haired stranger said, ignoring the other man entirely and speaking to the wolves.

The wolves looked up in unison and shifted forms turning into a frightening combination of man and wolf. One of the werewolves snarled to the white-haired man. "You've been told, freak, you're to stay out of our way!"

The werewolf quickly jumped forward racking a vicious claw over the white-haired man's chest. The man cried out loudly and gripped his bleeding wound. The poor victim could only watch as his savior's body began to contort, muscles bulging, white hair growing all

over his body, and his face elongating into a snout filled with razor sharp canines.

The white werewolf leapt at his attacker, still gripping the axe. With a swing seemingly fueled by the most unnatural of strength he buried its blade into the werewolf's head, causing the unholy beast to fall to the ground. The white beast ran to the other werewolf swinging his axe again, this time burying it into the common werewolf's shoulder. The beast tried to claw at his attacker but the white werewolf simply opened his mouth and a cone of pure ice and wind came shooting out causing the darker lycanthrope to cry out in agony before collapsing lifeless to the ground.

The human could only shake with fear as the white werewolf turned around, it's unnerving eyes falling upon the lone human, and in that moment he knew it would have been better if the darker wolves had killed him, for only Ezra knew what this albino monstrosity would do.

### Mikel Koz

**Male Human Maledictive Winter-Werewolf, Brb6\*:** CR 8; ECL 8; Medium-size Shape Changer; HD 6d12+12 (6d12+42 as hybrid); hp 52 (84 as hybrid); Init +2 (+7 as Hybrid); Spd 40 ft; AC 12, (18 as hybrid) (12 Touch [13 as Hybrid], Flat Footed 10 [15 as Hybrid]); Atks: +11/+6 Melee (+15/+10 as Hybrid) melee (1d12+4+1d6 (cold)[1d12+8+1d6 (cold) as hybrid]); SA Cursed Rage\*\* (Breath Weapon, Lycanthropic Empathy, Trip as hybrid); SQ Uncanny Dodge (Can't be flanked), Racial Bonuses to Skills (Damage Reduction 15/Silver, Fast Healing 5, Cold Subtype, Scent as hybrid); AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +2 (+12/+5/+2 as hybrid); Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 13 (Str 24, Dex 16, Con 24 as hybrid).

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*Skills and Feats:* Control Shape +13, Intimidate +10, Jump +12, Listen +13 (+17 as hybrid), Search +4 (+8 as hybrid), Spot +4 (+8 as hybrid), Wilderness Lore +9 (Hide +6, Move Silently +7 as hybrid); Weapon Focus: Great Axe, Power Attack, Skill Focus: Control Shape, Track (Bull Rush, Alertness, Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative, Run as hybrid).

\*Numbers in Parentheses represent Mikel's stats in hybrid form.

\*\* See Combat Section for special rules concerning Mikel's rage.

## Appearance

In his human form Mikel could actually be considered handsome, in a rustic kind of way. He stands six feet tall, has deep brown eyes and always dresses in a simple pair of woolen trousers and an equally simple drab brown tunic. He almost always wears a gentle smirk on his friendly looking face. His most striking feature though is his long hair; going just past his shoulders his hair is stark white. This feature alone makes many people suspicious of him. When he's angered those eyes narrow yet his smirk remains, giving him a predatory and downright evil appearance. If this weren't bad enough when his anger finally becomes too much for him he'll often transform into his secondary form, that of a seven-foot tall man-winter wolf hybrid with foam dripping from his snout, his brown eyes little more than pinpricks. It is in this form where he has no control and becomes a rampaging beast that kills at random. No matter what form he takes he always wields a primitive looking great axe with an iron blade and a bleached white wooden handle.

## Background

Mikel hasn't always been the force of destruction that he is today. He began life in the distant domain of Sanguinia, the third son of a village chieftain. His late birth made it certain that one of his brothers would become chieftain instead of him so he threw himself into the

wilderness around him and developed his own ample physical attributes. His favorite playmate in those days was his cousin Dragomir; while the boy lacked Mikel's strength he was much more clever and much lighter on his feet. The two boys complimented each other quite well and quickly became known among the villagers as a pair of good-natured troublemakers.

As the pair grew up they each gravitated toward different professions. Mikel became one of the village's warriors while Dragomir took up the mantle of the hunter risking the dangerous wilderness to bring in meat for his fellow villagers. On occasion Mikel would accompany Dragomir on these hunting trips. While he lacked Dragomir's hunting skills his strong arm was always welcomed when things got dangerous for the young hunter. On one such trip a violent blizzard forced the pair into a mountain cave. As the cousins explored the cave they found statues of wolves, and what looked to be signs of some elder civilization.

In the center of this strange underground ruin was a throne, and on it the skeletal remains of a human clutching a primitive great axe by a bleached white handle, along with a spear tipped with a bronze head piercing the corpse's chest. The young men quickly claimed the weapons, Mikel the axe while Dragomir took the spear. The men were slightly disturbed by what they saw in the cave but when the blizzard passed they dug themselves out of the snow and hiked back home ignorant of what they had brought with them.

Over the next several weeks Mikel began to change. His dreams were filled with images of a primitive society of man-beasts who ruled over humans like cattle and hunted them for sport. Mikel's fascination with those dreams couldn't help but grow when the moon became full. On the night of that full moon he became one of the beast-men he had dreamt about. His form became that of a seven-foot tall man-wolf covered in snow-white fur. In the violent haze of the night he hunted the wilderness killing any creature that approached him, including a local farmer out looking for firewood.

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The rush of power he felt that night gave him all sorts of new feelings, chief among them was his position in the village. He was stronger now than both of his brothers, and Mikel began to wonder why they should be in line to lead the village when only he held the power to lead the village to prosperity. So when the full moon once again graced the night sky he ran wild through his home slaying his father, his brothers, and his mother when she tried to protect one of his wounded brothers. He left the carnage of his home to find that the villagers had assembled outside of the chieftain's home. The sun came up at that moment returning Mikel to his true form and causing panic among the villagers. Mikel declared himself the village's new chieftain only to have a stone thrown at him. This enraged Mikel and he lashed out slaying an innocent man with one swing from his great axe. The man's wife went to his side and looked up at would-be chieftain whose hair had changed from pitch black to stark white and called down the wrath of the gods upon Mikel, saying that as long as he killed without remorse he would not be able to control his rage. Mikel felt a deep fear inside of him and left the village he'd called home, rushing headlong into the Mists seeking escape from the curse laid on him.

## Current sketch

Mikel emerged in Verbrek and it dawned on him that he was now in a society like the one he'd dreamt of since he acquired his accursed axe. This was not enough for Mikel though; he still lusted for political power. So he went among the werewolves of Verbrek and tried to prove himself worthy but he found himself unable to manifest his hybrid form. An uncontrollable anger burned inside of Mikel and he found himself changing yet still unable to control his actions. He lashed out and slew everyone around him before returning to human form.

After that the weight of his curse struck Mikel. He was unable to change shape or rage at will. Instead whenever he got angry or suffered a wound he had to fight to retain his human form.

Normally, changing to his hybrid form wouldn't be too bad for Mikel, but he soon discovered he was reduced to a rabid beast while in this form incapable of anything but killing. He couldn't hunt, he couldn't interact; instead he brought only destruction.

This made Mikel the black sheep, so to speak, among the werewolves of Verbrek. They ignore him under most circumstances, but if he gets in their way they attack him and he invariably kills them, only reinforcing his position as an outsider. Mikel stewes endlessly over his fate, venting his frustration on the humans of the land. His dreams of leadership in a lycanthropic society are now within sight but constantly out of his reach.

## Combat

No matter what form Mikel takes he wields his cursed +1 Great Axe of Frost in battle. This weapon functions like a normal axe of its particular enchantment, but every week that it is carried the user must make a will save (DC 15) or become a chaotic evil maledictive winter werewolf.

**Cursed Rage (Ex):** Mikel is unable to control neither his rage nor his shapeshifting ability. Should he suffer damage he must make a Control Shape check (DC15+Damage Dealt) or immediately change into a hybrid and rage at the same time. Mikel, having no control of himself under these circumstances, is unable to use any skills or non-combat related feats. The adjustments of his hybrid form and rage stack and his stat block are already adjusted for this stacking effect. It should also be noted that he is no longer limited to a certain number of times per day that he can rage. If he's wounded, he will rage. The rage continues for the normal length of a barbarian's rage or until every intelligent creature within thirty feet is dead.

**Breath Weapon (Su):** Once every 1d4 rounds Mikel can spew a cone of cold (15 feet) that does 4d6 points of cold damage. A reflex save (DC 16) halves this damage.

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## Adventure ideas

- ♦ The simplest adventure involving Mikel would focus around hunting the increasingly infamous albino werewolf. Part of the adventure would center on finding the identity of the albino werewolf. The latter half of the adventure would focus on the destruction of Mikel himself. With Mikel's physical strength a direct confrontation would be doomed to failure; PCs hoping to defeat him will have to use subtlety and intelligence, two traits that Mikel doesn't have.
- ♦ The cave that Mikel found his axe in hints at a much darker threat than the man himself. If there was indeed a civilization of werewolves in the Frozen Reaches, the odds are that they ranged further beyond just one cave. Hunting these locations could make for an interesting series of adventures. Not to mention the fact that somewhere in one of those caves natural winter werewolves may still lurk waiting to be unleashed upon the world again.

- ♦ An unexpected ally for either of the above adventures could appear in the form of Dragomir who was away hunting when Mikel murdered his family. The young hunter then began to hunt down his cousin in hopes of either killing or saving him. If the goal turns to simple destruction of Mikel the first adventure option can be used. But attempts at saving Mikel from the grips of his two curses can be even more complicated. The curse of the axe may be lifted by a remove curse spell, or it may take as much as a limited wish depending on the DM's whim. Removing his second curse may entail teaching Mikel that violence only begets suffering. If this second curse is lifted Mikel may eventually lose his rage and multi-class to a cleric and become a pacifist.



# BROTHERHOOD OF CONTEMPLATIVE POWER

AN ORDER OF MONK LOCATED IN BAROVIA

By: Ed Kowalczewski  
(Edziu)

A brief history of the  
Brotherhood, its founder,  
various related items of  
power, and its current  
sad state of affairs.

Barovia; spring, 525.

"...and this man Houtras, who has healed the villagers, he does not appear to be a priest?"

The young Vistana shifted his weight uneasily; he was uncomfortable with his role as messenger to this particular individual. "No, my Lord. As I have said, I have seen the mother of the blacksmith, who had been as a lost one for months, up and talking with her family. He has been seen performing other wonders as well. We thought you might be interested, as you are, in visitors, from time to time."

Silence filled the air as the messenger considered his fate and whether or not the news seemed to have intrigued his listener. A chill, colder than one could expect from mountain air or a drafty castle froze his spine as the messenger realized that his news might not have pleased the master.

"This does interest me, as your raunie had guessed. Send her my regards." These last words were accompanied by the toss of a small pouch that clinked as the Vistana caught it deftly

with a relieved sigh. "I believe that this Houtras may receive a visitor quite soon."

\*\*\*

Houtras leaned back into his chair. The day had been quite long, and he thought that the last of the people seeking his help had finally left. The inn was an ideal place for the villagers to gather, but it left him little privacy to meditate. "Ah well," he thought "a mind worthy of a true path can learn as much from others, as from within itself."

His brief respite was cut short by the innkeeper. "Sir, there's a gentleman here tha-"

Striding into the room and interrupting the innkeeper was a tall, pale, finely clothed man that had the air of one used to being obeyed. "I can introduce myself. I am Lord Vasili von Holtz, an emissary of Count Strahd von Zarovich. I am here to speak with the man Houtras, and report back to the Count on what his plans here are. Are you Houtras?"

Hearing this, the innkeeper backed out quickly, glancing at the young man who had been helping the villagers all day and mumbling a prayer to protect them both from The Devil Strahd. Houtras looked at von Holtz and lightly touched his aura to divine his intentions. Instantly, he realized that the man before him was no longer alive, and that the power of this individual far outreached his own. With most of his strength used up over the course of the day, he was certain he had no chance of surviving an outright battle with this creature. His only chance of seeing the next day alive was to find a way to outsmart it, or make the creature want to let him live.

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Steeling his nerve, he barely skimmed the surface of the maddening undead thought patterns to get a sense of identity and desires. He sensed the vampire's true name...Strahd! "This is really The Devil Strahd that people have been talking about since I got here? Gods protect me." A little more was what he needed; what did Strahd want from him? How could he get out of this with his skin intact? "Power. He desires Power. And curiosity. He wants knowledge of something...."

The chill of the grave associated with Strahd's mind, combined with his dire circumstances almost made him break into a shiver. Houtras was unsure of the usefulness of the information. Power, curiosity, need...his teachers, long ago, had taught him to use the thoughts of others to his own advantage. With his mind's eye he saw the homeland he left behind when walking into that misty fog, all the intense training he had gone through, the villagers here he had helped, young Kolnya, who showed promise like he himself had many years ago, and suddenly, his path seemed clear. The chill receded from his mind. He held to the vision of his training, and thought quickly of a prayer that seemed appropriate: "Thank you my teachers, for training this student well. May I someday surpass your expectations."

The entire mind-touch had been very brief. He had been rising slowly from his seat throughout the while to give himself the time to cover the scan. He smiled at his visitor and said "Yes, I am Houtras, Lord von Holtz. I apologize for keeping you waiting. Of my own plans and desires, these are quite few indeed. I am merely a humble student of the mind. However, I'd like to talk to you about an opportunity that the Count might find very intriguing."

"And mutually beneficial," he added silently.

\*\*\*

## Background

The Brotherhood of Contemplative Power is a Lawful Good Order that seeks to develop the powers of the mind and through study, achieve inner peace and harmony. Members of the Order are usually Psions, but a few Psychic Warriors also exist. Despite the name, the Order accepts both men and women as students; the name was a poor translation of the name of Houtras's original Order.

A young Psion named Houtras, who came through the Mists from an unnamed land, founded the Order in 525. Through an arrangement with Strahd von Zarovich, Houtras was allowed to set up a monastic order in a minor keep in the mountains near Immol. (Strahd had removed the previous owner and family years earlier due to tax collection infractions.) The keep had lain empty for several years until the young psion had an interview with Strahd. To intrigue the vampire, Houtras suggested that setting up a monastery devoted to learning the powers of the mind might discover almost anything. Strahd, wishing to learn more about psionic powers and hoping they might eventually lead to an escape from the Mists, allowed the establishment of the Order. The remoteness of the monastery allowed the Order to remain mostly secret in keeping with Strahd's plans. Strahd desired to obtain whatever knowledge they gained for himself, and also to hold the psionic monks as a weapon in reserve against the unknown threat that Madame Eva had predicted would soon threaten both Strahd and Barovia. During the entire time Azalin had been in Barovia, Strahd left the monastery alone, to reduce the chance that Azalin might consider it anything more than a small cult of religious zealots and to keep them secret if he ever needed a surprise.

Houtras began looking for likely students in the local villages. His first pupil was Kolnya Jirecek. Searching from town to town, he soon found several more, and led them all to the keep that would serve as their new home. Houtras attempted to recreate his own training regimen as much as possible, but was unable to duplicate the full breadth of knowledge that he had left behind. The students often researched areas of power with which Houtras was



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unfamiliar. These paths were different than his own. Seeing the students' progress, he spent some time scribing all he could recall of the various paths of learning and encouraged the others to assist him. He also wanted the ethical and spiritual side of their studies emphasized, to ensure that the power the monks sought was in keeping with the ultimate goal of facilitating harmony. These scrolls became the sacred writings of the Order, and copies still serve as the guideposts for the monks in their search for truth. As new knowledge is found, the library of the monks grows, but the basic foundations remain the same.

In the beginning the Order did very well. Its remoteness made certain that the monks would be little disturbed by outsiders or creatures of the night. Only a few novices were accepted each year. New applicants were most often found by monks that returned to their home villages for family visits. Eventually, some novices were children born to monks in the Order. Several years of development passed, and Strahd made only a few demands on their services (mostly reports on various aspects of the mists and such). Houtras remained the head of the Order for many years, finally allowing Kolyna to take the position in 579 when he took some time to research pieces of a book he had received months ago from visiting adventurers. Then, shortly after the war with Darkon started, a new land appeared that would almost destroy the entire Order.

In 581, Bluetspur appeared...

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Despite the early afternoon sunlight, the young monks shivered as they watched the mountains around them for signs of trouble. Repeated attacks had come most nights from every direction, mostly below. The horrifying tentacled creatures, their inhuman servants, and the sudden disappearances of screaming monks had unnerved the survivors. They knew that the few that remained would not last long here, and their way of life would likely be lost forever.

Fleeing at this point was an ill-advised plan. The creatures were coming out from the caves that dotted the mountain range the monastery lay in, and would surely overwhelm any escaping monks. The monastery was at least somewhat defensible, but was crumbling under the repeated assaults. Even worse, monks who began to use their abilities were often sucked away by an immense psychic presence that left their companions shaken and nightmare-ridden. A solution to their predicament had to be found fast, or none would survive.

One of the watchers spotted a single individual coming up the path to the gates. The Order had sent out a messenger to the armies to the North, but they were still busy with the war defeating straggling bands crossing the border and were unlikely to send assistance. Other individuals had left for their homes, or to see if any other assistance could be gained, but were thought not to have succeeded in their escape. A small group had taken a score of survivors who had fled from the new lands down to Immol, once they had stayed at the monastery several days and healed enough for travel. The few remaining monks, fearful and hopeful, looked on to see who this might be.

Joyful exclamations erupted as Kolyna pulled back his cloak and greeted them. "My friends, I come to you with news. News that will save us, and yet sadden you all. Our founder Houtras has died. He had been working for several years on a project that he believed would aid us in our quest for knowledge, and in this hour our need is truly great for any assistance we can find. Behold!"

Kolyna unloosened the last tie that kept his long bundle wrapped tight and held aloft a clear crystal rod that shone with inner light. "This is the Rod of Houtras. I do not understand everything about it, but I have found it can shield us and hide us as we escape. Quickly! Gather now everything you can carry. We shall leave here before sunset."

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Kolyna was able to lead his remaining people out to Immol, where they stayed for several weeks. Having learned of their plight, Strahd decided that he still wanted to keep the Order as a resource. Several inquiries he had made to them earlier about crystals and the mind allowed him to perfect a small device he used during the war. The Order was now allowed to build at their current site, and was assisted by some of the now-unemployed army of Barovia. These workers were taught trades during the building, and thus would be employable after the job was done. Also, while they worked, they would not be roaming the country as mercenaries. This helped Strahd solve several problems at once.

The survivors of Thaan that had been taken in by the surviving monks had not escaped unscathed. Most of them suffered from one form of madness or another. The tales they told blended parts of what they experienced in Bluetspur, some hallucinatory episodes, and bits of the monks' history they had learned. In this way, the Ildi'Thaan were eventually born out of imagined, exaggerated and misinterpreted stories. Some of the current animosity between the two groups can be tied to the misunderstandings, mad ravings, and outright lies that were told during this time. The Ildi'Thaan eventually took over the abandoned keep and renamed it Irkat Thaan. Some members of the Order believe the Thaan may have found scrolls accidentally left there that were interpreted as parts of the reputed 13 lost texts of Thaan.

## The Rod of Houtras

The Rod of Houtras, also known as the Sacred Barrier, was adopted shortly after the move as the symbol of the Order. The Rod is considered the holy icon of the Order. The monks wear tiny replicas of the Rod as their symbol, but these do not possess any powers. The Rod is the hidden reason that the monks can develop their abilities as well as they do in their monastery. Kolyna had discovered that putting psychic energy into the Rod created a psionic static field that worked to protect the user. In

time, after the repeated infusion of energy from the Order, the field operated whenever it was wielded by a monk. The monks each put in several power points during daily ceremonies, and over generations the pool has grown immense. The current dimensions of the field correspond to the boundaries of the monastery—which has a radius of slightly over 200ft.

The monks daily charge their energy into the Rod, which serves to protect them from the notice and intrusions of the God-Brain of Bluetspur, and also from the lowered recovery rate of psionic power points that exists throughout Ravenloft. As long as they remain on the monastery's grounds, and the Rod is present, they benefit from its protective aura. The rod has been absorbing the donated power points for generations now, and has a very large store. This protection does not extend to allowing the use of Ravenloft-affected abilities without repercussions. A powers check made on the grounds has the same chance of failure as it would elsewhere.

Houtras indeed created the Rod to help the Order, but not in the way that the members currently believe. The pages that he had been given by the visiting adventurers were pieces of the journal of the Apparatus. After reading the sections, Houtras fell under their sway and believed that the Apparatus could be used to split the mind from the body. This would enable the user to exist as pure thought, without the influences of the physical form. He saw that he did not have the complete plans, and beyond that concern the Rod that served as the linchpin of the device would not work in the way he desired. He saw that he would have to create a different, psionically active Rod. He spent almost 2 years using the various psionic crystal device creation methods, until he finally achieved success in creating the Rod. But his body could not take the strains he had placed upon it and died, leaving the Rod to his successor who did not know of its intended purpose.

Unknown to anyone in the Brotherhood, as the Rod absorbs the donated power points from the monks it gives off an unnoticed



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resonance that acts as a posthypnotic suggestion. If a member of the Order comes across something having to do with the Apparatus he will find that his interest is piqued, and he will attempt to discover more. A monk that eventually finds a manual, or the Apparatus itself, will almost certainly fall under an obsession to use it. If the Rod of Houtras is used, the normal use of transpossession can be obtained, or the body can indeed be split from the mind. What would happen to each part once split is up to individual DMs.

## Members

The members of the order are men and women that are called to understand the world and themselves through the study of the powers of the mind. Some of the students are recruited by the monks in their journeys. Others have heard of the Order, and seek it out. The total number of members remains low, as few people have the gift for psionic potential. The scrolls and teachings left by Houtras are used as guides to true understanding. Every person seeks his or her own path, supported and aided by his or her fellows and guided by knowledge from the past.

The various disciplines for the Psions and the Way of the Psychic Warrior correspond to separate "paths to understanding". Houtras also set up a separate mastery for each path, and an organization structure for the novices, students, masters, and head of the Order. At the bottom of the Order are the novices, who do much of the daily work, but also go through rigorous initial training to help them achieve the mastery they seek. A novice will become a student once he or she can display proficiency in a mental ability. The masters usually will recommend a path for the student after studying his or her abilities. The students will eventually become masters themselves after a long period of learning, and will be expected to teach the new novices and students. When students, many monks see those engaged in gaining different paths to mastery as rivals. However, upon achieving mastery the paths are more clearly seen as part of the whole. From the masters of

each path one is chosen to both lead and speak for members of that path. From among the leaders, one is usually selected to head the Order, his place being filled again from the undermasters. There have been times in the Order's history when there were very few members in a given path, and a member of a different path would be chosen to lead the empty path. This was to achieve balance within the Order. Seeking harmony within and without is one of the ideals for which the Order strives.

In addition to the monks, sometimes like-minded allies may stay at the monastery. Many come to develop their psionic talents through training by the monks. Some stay to become monks. Others leave when their mental abilities don't develop as well as they had hoped. A few have, at times, permanently aligned themselves with the Brotherhood without becoming full members themselves. Anitella and Lord Drassak were honorary members of the Brotherhood.

## Current sketch

During the theft of the Rod in 739, the protections that the Order had relied upon against the Elder God-Brain especially were gone. For several weeks, its mental fingers insinuated themselves into a majority of the Order's members, driving them mad and finally taking them bodily to Bluetspur. The interest that it had for these former members may have divided its attention, allowing a small group of heroes to enter Bluetspur and return with the Rod.

The remains of the order that the heroes came back to were small indeed. There were only 14 members remaining alive and somewhat sane, and two more that had been driven mad to be taken care of by the others. Much of their strength was gone. For many years the struggle for survival and day-to-day activities dominated their attention. A few of the survivors left the order, never to return again. The possibility of disbanding the Order was broached, but

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survivors' guilt and fear kept the remaining members together.

The Order only numbers 26 members now, the majority being young students. Their previous system of traversing up paths is still available, but has fallen into some disuse, due to the low population. The trepidatious attitude of the survivors has been spread to most of the new members, fearing the outside and favoring seclusion and safety in the monastery.

The current head of the Order is Rehor Brusov. He is a conservative, well read 8th level Shaper in his early 50s with bright blue eyes and no hair. His head usually has some psionic tattoo inscribed upon it. Rehor is quite fond of a well-cooked meal, but has no talents in that direction. Smart PCs can get on his good side with a delicious dinner and discourse on recent books. He currently favors a more isolationist attitude, as do most of the members due to the brief theft of the Rod years ago, despite its return. Any major expenditure or effort that does not have to do with the defense of the Order, gain of new members, or the established activities list will meet with his disapproval.

**Rehor Brusov, Male Human Psi8(Shaper):** CR8; Medium-size Humanoid (5ft. 8in. tall); HD 8d4; hp 29; Init +1; Spd 30ft; AC 17; Atk +1 ranged; SA psionics; AL LG; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +8; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 17, Wis 11, Cha 14.

*Skills:* Psicraft +14, Concentration +12, Knowledge +16, Craft +14

*Possessions:* Quarterstaff; Power Stones-ectoplasmic cocoon, concussion; Dorje of biocurrent.

*Psionic Abilities:* Power Points 37; Powers 6/4/3/2/1; Psionic Tattoos body adjustment, see invisibility, levitation, detect thoughts.

## Headquarters

The current location of the Order is a small monastery named Kolyna's Sanctuary. It lies close to the former Gundarak border, near where the Luna River descends from the mountains between Krezk and Berez. The buildings are arranged in a circular pattern around a large main tower that holds the Rod of Houtras. In this way its protection can extend to the entire grounds of the compound.

The path to the monastery is intentionally difficult to traverse. In the past, lookouts would watch the path to prepare the monastery for visitors. Seekers after knowledge were observed carefully during their climb up the long road, and the injured were usually met as they are noticed and assisted. Several members quickly scanned any visitors to determine the individual's intentions, and prepare the appropriate greeting. The current lack of personnel makes the chance of being noticed only 40%, but if seen, the rest of the compound is alerted of approaching visitors. Greetings are always cautious, as are most dealings with outsiders.

The mountain range near the monastery is the primary source of the various crystals the monks use in their device manufacture. Appropriate crystals are difficult to find, so the monks have a small mine that is used just for this purpose. The mine is only in use infrequently, so the likelihood of finding any monks there is very low.

The Order's main source of income comes from the manufacture of the brandywine tuika and the apple cider distillations. The surrounding villages know that some healing can sometimes be found there, if the hard trail can be traversed. Monks from the Order infrequently travel down to the villages to trade goods and pick up plums and apples for fermenting. The villagers have noticed that the number of bottles made seem unusually small for such a large monastery, but they assume that the rest are sent off to distant lands with passing traders. The Order actually only makes a bare minimum, so to maintain the income for supplies needed, but allows the fiction to continue to keep unwanted interruptions away from their meditations. Some

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of the crystals found in the mines that are unsuitable for the monk's uses are also traded away for income.

The nearby villages are under the impression that years ago a fever came upon the monastery, killing many members. Locals are not aware of the nature of the Order, but are generally well disposed toward members due to past healing, and good trade from the tuika and crystal mines. A guide may be obtained to lead a party to the monastery, but most villagers will generally not wish to stay there overnight.

## Recognition

Members of the Order may recognize other members through a variety of methods. Usually, the presence of the small Rod replica each member wears is the first indication. Another method is to demonstrate psionic ability to each other. The method most frequently used as confirmation is for one person to begin one of the proverbs from the scrolls of Houtras, and for the other person to finish it. With such a small number remaining, there is little likelihood of not recognizing one another, unless both are in disguise.

## Activities

In addition to the monastery upkeep, daily teaching of others, personal meditations, and explorations of self-knowledge, the monks feel they have several responsibilities to the world around them. They believe that the Order was the direct cause of the existence of these forces of evil, or the best suited to combat them. The Order has not been as active against these threats as they once were, but will occasionally lend a hand to thwart a particular evil.

**ILDI'THAAN:** The Ildi'Thaan usually attract the people who appreciate the idea of mental powers, and the search for them, but do not want to put in the hard work, meditation and such to attain them. Seeing the much greater powers of the Brotherhood has made them very envious. Sometimes the two groups clash over some recently unearthed item, ancient scroll or (rarely)

a promising young candidate. The personal power of the Brotherhood is usually greater, but the Ildi'thaan have far greater resources and numbers. Any conflict between the two groups usually involve quite a bit of sidestepping, because the Order does not care to be backed into a corner.

The Ildi'Thaan continue to search for the lost texts of Thaan, which some of their members believe to have been stolen away by the Brotherhood, and is the true source of the Order's greater powers. The Brotherhood does not currently have any of the texts, but is always on the lookout for psionic studies, in case one of their own scrolls is included or new knowledge can be obtained.

**PSIONIC LICHES:** The Order is aware of three psionic lichs in Ravenloft. Time and time again, they would attempt to combat the evil plots these creatures initiated. An elaborate network of proxies and servants exists under each creature. One remains almost totally unseen, his presence only experienced briefly about once every generation. The second actively seeks the downfall of the Order, perhaps for revenge, or proof of his superiority. The third is their greatest shame, for he was once a master within the Order itself. He is called the "Nameless One" by the monks, because before he embarked on his quest for lichdom, he attempted to destroy any records having to do with his history in the monastery.

The great power possessed by these three beings, and the subtle plots they weave should surely have destroyed the Order long ago if it weren't for two things. The Sacred Barrier protects the monks continuously from scrying and psionic attacks, as long as they remain on the grounds of the monastery. The second was something that the second lich learned quickly, but almost too late; Strahd does not allow lichs in Barovia. The monastery is never directly attacked, because none of the lichs want to risk crossing the border and feeling Strahd's wrath.

The Order carefully monitors rumors and recent events in an attempt to discover the plots of these evil masters, so to best ascertain

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how to combat them without falling into any traps. Any current rumors are generally passed on to adventuring parties when possible.

**ANIMATORS:** Psicrystals are one of the most useful tools of the psion, holding a fragment personality that grows in power along with the psion himself. Upon the death of the psion these usually "die" as well. In Ravenloft, however, the fragment personality has a chance of splitting away from its connection to the original. When it manages to do this, it can survive as an animator. These are usually the more malignantly considered emotional base forms, such as bully, coward, liar, and the like. The newborn animator is not complete in itself, so it attempts to recreate the dual bonds with a certain individual, and an object, as it had in its previous existence with psion and crystal. Usually the lesser form is the most common created this way, but some greater animators have also come from this source. Not all animators are thus born, but the Order does its best to try and combat all these creatures wherever it finds them whatever their source may be.

When an animator is rumored to be in a certain location, a monk will go out and determine if one does indeed reside there. If the creature can be contained and destroyed, the monk will make the attempt after careful study. If it appears to be too powerful, other monks in the order quickly answer a call for assistance. Sometimes the animator will escape, and the only thing the monks can do is wait for its next appearance. Several animators were loosed by the recent deaths, and are still at large.

## Adventure Hooks

- ◆ The PCs may have found one of the alleged ancient texts of Thaan. It is definitely part of a longer section and details knowledge of psionics. This would set up a conflict between the Ildi'thaan and the Brotherhood if both want to own the item in question of to whom it should belong. It might actually be completely new information that neither

group has, which would be even more valuable and may interest others as well.

- ◆ PCs may have run afoul of one of the Psionic lichs. In order to survive with their brains intact, they need to seek help from the Brotherhood, or perhaps the Brotherhood offers assistance first. The Brotherhood wouldn't seek repayment for the aid, but maybe a favor from the PCs...
- ◆ A PC suffering from madness needs to be cured, and nothing thus far has helped. A stay at a sanitarium has not resulted in any progress in recovery. A rumor of monks that can work miracles of the mind sends the PCs off to find the monastery.
- ◆ Trouble with a greater animator gets the PCs unexpected assistance from a member of the Brotherhood. A malign ferryboat waits for passengers to cross a large river, but nobody ever seems to get to the other side. This animator could be an ex-psicrystal personality of someone the monk has known at the monastery, and would be even more of a threat once it realizes the monk's identity and weaknesses.
- ◆ News of the Apparatus has a monk searching for more information. Other people would also be interested. Do the PCs know anything, or have they seen anything? Suspicious characters previously encountered may have some bizarre qualities that could be explained by the Apparatus. Have the PCs battled anything like that recently?
- ◆ The Brotherhood is in need of crystals to develop psionic items, especially for defense. A mining-proficient PC could be hired on to help find some likely deposits. Others could be hired on just to dig. A larger search may send PCs to neighboring lands for an ideal specific crystal that is requested by a member. This can be a way to send PCs underground if the DM wishes, or even meeting up with the Dark Delves.

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- ♦ The PCs come across a developing psion, or perhaps one of the PCs wishes to investigate any abilities they might have in that area.

Finding a teacher is difficult, but I heard there might be a small place in Barovia...



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## THE CHILDREN OF WRATH

### A SECRET SOCIETY FOR SITHICUS

By: Nathan Okerlund  
(Dmitri Stanislaus)

The children of wrath are  
strength and madness.

--Sithican proverb

A secret society for  
Sithicus. The elves of  
Sithicus have lived  
beneath the tyranny of  
Lord Soth and Azrael Dak  
for long years, but some  
of them are determined to  
struggle for their  
freedom. Unfortunately,  
this group of would-be  
freedom fighters is riven  
by internal dissension...

For as long as Sithicus has been a part of  
Ravenloft the elves of that domain have labored  
beneath the despotism of the Dark Knight known  
among the elves as the Black Rose and of his  
seneschal Azrael Dak, and almost from that same  
time a few elves have actively resisted his rule,  
living in the deep woods of the domain and  
struggling for their freedom. These few rebels  
refer to themselves as the Children of Wrath, an  
ironic reference to the fact that their rebellion was  
the product of their hatred for their domineering  
and cruel ruler.

It seemed that their oppression might be  
lifted when Lord Soth mysteriously disappeared,  
but instead it has only worsened as Azrael has  
attempted to assert his authority over the domain.  
In response to his increasing brutality this  
resistance movement has grown and become more

radical, more willing to use violence, and a larger  
factor in the politics of the domain. The increased  
visibility and policies of these new members of  
the Children of Wrath has polarized the elven  
community; many are in favor of active  
resistance, while many others fear their efforts as  
misguided, destructive, and only calculated to  
increase Azrael's efforts to extinguish any  
resisting element of elvish society.

### Helvath Makira

**Medium-size Elf, Rgr12:** CR 12; HD 12d10+12  
(78 hp); Initiative +2; Spd 30 ft; AC 17 (15 flat-  
footed); Atk +13/+8/+3 (melee), +16/+11/+6  
(ranged); Face/Reach 5'x5'; SA spells, racial  
abilities; AL CN; SV Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +5;  
Str 15, Dex 19, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 15.

*Skills and Feats:* Concentration +9, Heal +6,  
Hide +11, Jump +7, Knowledge (Sithicus) +6,  
Listen +13, Move Silently +14, Spot +13,  
Wilderness Lore +11; Track, Two-Weapon  
Fighting (when in light armor or no armor),  
Improved Two-Weapon Fighting (when in light  
armor or no armor), Dodge, Mobility, Point  
Blank Shot, Shot on the Run, Run.

*Items:* Longbow +2, Bracers of Defense AC 15,  
silvered longsword, cold iron short sword

*Spells:* 2/1/1

### Background

Helvath Makira was among the elves  
living in Sithicus when the Mists opened to  
receive the Blackguard and created the domain;  
he was a simple woodsman who lived with his  
wife and young son and made his living by  
hunting and trapping. He had little knowledge of  
his ruler and less interest in him--until the day  
that Azrael Dak and a group of human  
mercenaries appeared at his door, demanding that  
he tell them of the dark-haired, armored woman



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who had been seen in the region. At first Helvath treated their request with contempt, saying (truthfully) that he knew nothing of any dark-haired woman; losing patience, Dak demanded that Helvath tell everything he knew, then ordered the mercenaries to take his wife and son and torture them until Helvath gave his information. At this Helvath snapped into a blind fury and killed two of the mercenaries before Dak and the remaining warriors drove him off and took his wife and child captive with them as they returned to Nedragaard Keep. Helvath followed them, only to lose the trail when they entered the city of Har-Thelen; he heard there that they had been sold as slaves, but he never saw nor heard from them again. For more than a year he searched the city for them; at last he fled into the wilds of Sithicus, living off the land and dreaming of taking revenge on Dak. Soon he began to apply his ability as a hunter to the Blackguard's soldiers and tax collectors, hunting them down and using his abilities as a dead-eye archer to strike them from hiding.

Soon he became the object of a massive man-hunt, but his familiarity with the forests of Sithicus and experience in living off the land enabled him to keep one step ahead of his hunters, and as time went on he became a heroic figure to many of the elves of Sithicus. Indeed, it was not long before others who had suffered at the hands of Dak or Soth's other servants began to flee into the woods of Sithicus to seek him out. At first Helvath was reluctant to be distracted from his personal quest for vengeance, but on hearing the stories of so many others who had been wronged by Soth's despotic rule he began to feel the need to oppose the tyranny under which the elves of Sithicus suffered. As time went on he became the de facto head of a small group of rebels and exiles dedicated to overthrowing Soth's rule. The group soon began to refer to themselves as the Children of Wrath, an ironic reference to their hatred of their rulers taken from the Sithican proverb, "The children of wrath are strength and madness."

## Current Sketch

Helvath is taller and sturdier than the average elf; he has light brown hair, which he

wears in long braids, dark green eyes and a pale triangular scar under his left eye. He dresses in green and brown and goes barefoot except in deepest winter--a habit which many of the Children have adopted in imitation of him. (He does it from a belief that it helps him to move more silently and quickly through the forest.) Even among the elves of Sithicus, who are not the most cheerful or trusting of folk, he is considered gloomy and suspicious of outsiders. Unlike most Sithicans, who are usually adept at hiding their true feelings, he is volatile and often subject to fits of incandescent wrath, but in more relaxed moments he is a master storyteller with a gift for physical comedy. His intense loyalty to his friends and a certain gruff, paternal camaraderie have won him the loyalty of his followers, most of whom would gladly die for him.

## Combat

Makira specializes in long distance combat, taking advantage of his foresting abilities to strike from concealment with his longbow +2, which he calls Viper's Tooth. Many a mercenary has died, an arrow in his eye or in his throat, before even becoming aware of Makira's presence. When possible, he avoids hand-to-hand combat, preferring to lure his opponents into ambushes where they can be exposed to a hail of arrow fire. If forced into hand-to-hand combat, he attacks with a silvered longsword in one hand and a cold iron shortsword in the other. He wears a set of Bracers of Defense AC 15, which he has painted a non-reflective black.

## Narwin E'tallin

**Medium-size Elf, Rog9:** CR 9; HD 9d6+3 (35 hp); Initiative +2; Spd 30 ft; AC 12; Atk +6/+1 (melee), +8/+3 (ranged); Face/Reach 5'x5'; SA thief abilities, racial abilities; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +7; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 18, Wis 15, Cha 16.

*Skills and Feats:* Appraise +16, Bluff +15, Decipher Script +10, Diplomacy +21, Disable Device +10, Disguise +13, Forgery +16, Gather Information +11, Innuendo +16, Intimidate +11,



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Listen +12, Open Locks +8, Read Lips +12, Search +12, Spot +12, Sense Motive +14, Use Magic Item +9; Alertness, Iron Will, Skill Focus: Diplomacy, Toughness.

(Note: E'tallin's skill points include all relevant synergy bonuses.)

*Items:* Dagger of Venom +2, ring of gaseous form.

## Background

Narwin E'tallin was born in the slums of Har-Thelen; he never knew his father, and while still a child his mother abandoned him to the care of an uncle, a minor merchant of the city dealing in second-hand goods, after she remarried and left the city. His uncle was distant but not cruel; he was an extremely astute businessman and famous for being a sharp dealer, and Narwin soon learned from him to look out for number one and let the customer fend for himself. As he grew older he began to play an active role in his uncle's business, which he soon realized consisted mostly of fencing stolen goods. He often made trips into Invidia and Kartakass to dispose of particularly "hot" items of merchandise, and what he saw there of human culture and human attitudes toward elves created in him a reciprocal dislike of everything human--a dislike which deepened into hatred and a deep-seated chauvinism as he grew older.

After his uncle's death under mysterious circumstances Narwin inherited his uncle's business and business contacts, and he set about making money and expanding the reach of his underworld contacts. He would probably have remained a minor figure in Har-Thelen's criminal community if it were not for his arrest and imprisonment for handling the sale of a necklace stolen from the home of Mason, the Lord Speaker of Har-Thelen.

While in prison Narwin met and was befriended by Elkarah Nath, a member of the Children of Wrath imprisoned as a suspect in the death of one of the Blackguard's tax collectors. At first Narwin was skeptical of Elkarath's motives and bewildered by his altruism; the idea of doing something for the benefit of others without

expecting some compensation was completely alien to Narwin's world view. However, he was deeply impressed by Elkarath's manner and the intensity of his convictions. Soon he became convinced of the necessity to struggle for freedom; he also came to believe that he had been forced into a life of crime by the oppression of the Blackguard and his followers, and that criminality was the natural result of unjust laws. With all the zeal of a new convert he resolved to bring the struggle of the Children of Wrath to the streets of its cities by recruiting the cities' criminals to active resistance of Lord Soth's regime--but, of course, he could hardly do so while still in prison.

Here Fate took a hand, whether for good or ill; on a night later referred to as the Night of Screaming Shadows, Lord Soth disappeared from his castle--an occurrence which entirely disrupted the workings of the Sithican government, military, and police for weeks. The Children of Wrath took advantage of the confusion resulting from this occasion to mount a jailbreak, freeing most of the prison population, including Elkarath and Narwin, and Narwin immediately began to put his plans into action. He used his silver tongue, his extensive connections in the criminal community of Har-Thelen, and his newfound contacts among the Children of Wrath to form a new urban appendage of the Children. Under his supervision the movement began growing rapidly, and at the present time the number of Children in the large cities of Sithicus has actually outstripped the number of those who live in the wilds.

## Current Sketch

Narwin E'tallin is of average height for an elf and quite thin, with short blond hair and pale green eyes which glow with the fervor of fanatical devotion to his cause. Other than that gleam, he usually affects the lack of expression of a professional gambler, observing and calculating, but when called on to employ his persuasive gifts he displays an emotional range which would do credit to the most practiced actor. He wears ordinary workman's clothing, consciously avoiding any outward display of

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wealth, both to avoid attracting unwanted attention and to show solidarity with the common folk of Sithicus. He is capable of being charming, moving, and generous; he is also absolutely ruthless in his pursuit of his overarching goal: the death of Dak and his supporters and the forced removal of all non-elves from Sithicus. He will use any means necessary to achieve those ends.

## Combat

E'tallin will avoid open combat if at all possible; his skill is with words, not with blades. However, he is not above personally disposing of someone who is making himself a nuisance if such an opportunity presents itself. He carries a dagger of venom +2 for such cases, in addition to several daggers and stilettos of the ordinary variety. If pressed into combat he will call for his bodyguards (a pair of 3rd level fighters/thieves) who are always within earshot, then use a ring of gaseous form to make his escape. If an individual or group makes an unsuccessful attempt on E'tallin's life, they can certainly expect that the Children of Wrath will do everything in their power to make an example of the offending party.

## The Children of Wrath

The Children of Wrath themselves are now easily separated into two groups: the original Children, mostly rangers and druids looking to Helvath Makira for leadership, and the urban Children, most of whom are rogues, who are led by Narwin E'tallin. The two groups share a common name and a common goal, but their composition and tactics are quite different, and a split--possibly a violent split--seems to loom in their future.

The wilderness branch of the Children is mostly elves forced from their homes for one reason or another by the Blackguard, Azrael Dak, or their followers who have fled to the wilderness to oppose Dak. All acknowledge Helvath as their leader, but other than that they have little central organization; they have had little need for elaborate measures to identify themselves as Children of Wrath, since nearly all know each

other by sight. Generally, they have few long-term plans for resistance; their idea of resistance is confined mostly to putting arrows into tax collectors and spreading the proceeds among the poor.

In contrast, the urban organization of the Children is composed principally of criminals and former criminals from the slums of the cities of Sithicus. They are mostly organized into small cells by neighborhood, and, in fact, in many places the organization of the Children has simply co-opted that of the local thieves' guild. These Children are mostly younger and more willing to resort to violence to achieve their ends and are less particular about who gets hurt than their wilderness counterparts. In fact, they have adopted a policy of violence which Narwin hopes to use to cause the whole country to rise in revolution. He intends to carry out a program of ever more violent protests, jailbreaks, and riots in the hope of provoking a heavy-handed government response. This repression, Narwin reasons, will cause increased hatred of Dak, causing more people to turn to the Children to end Dak's rule and enabling still more violent acts of protest, leading to even more violent repression, and so forth. Narwin hopes to use this vicious cycle to spark a domain-wide revolution which will topple Dak and place he himself and the Children of Wrath in a position of power after the revolution. He also hopes to expel all non-elves from Sithicus, by force if necessary, and non-elvish visitors to the cities of Sithicus may find themselves the targets of random acts of violence or vandalism as the urban Children express their dislike of foreigners of other races.

Helvath and the wilderness Children have, up to this time, often worked in concert with the urban Children in their more ambitious acts of defiance, but most of them fear that Narwin's idea will only cause needless bloodshed among the innocent. Narwin is willing to see innocents die if his goals can be achieved; Helvath is not, and as the results of the urban Children's actions become clearer, Helvath has begun to protest against the course Narwin is taking--protests which Narwin has ignored or belittled. In addition, Helvath and his followers fear that Narwin will attempt to usurp power over

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the Children as a whole and convert them from a loosely organized band of rebels into an underground army under his control.

Up to the moment the two groups have set aside their differences for the sake of their common goal--ending the reign of Azreal Dak in Sithicus--but each side is losing patience with the other, and there may soon be bloodshed amidst the ranks of the Children of Wrath...

## Elkarah Nath

**Male half-elf Brd8:** CR 8; Medium-size humanoid; HD 8d6+16 (48 hp); Init +6; Spd 30 feet; AC 12; Atk +7/+2 melee, +8/+3 ranged; Face/Reach 5'/5'; SA Bard abilities, spells; SQ Elf blood; AL CG; SV Fort +2, Ref +6, Wil +2; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 18.

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +9, Concentrate +5, Diplomacy +9, Disguise + 13 (+23 with hat of disguise), Gather Information + 12, Listen +6, Perform +15 (epic, ballad, lute, mandolin, storytelling), Search +7, Spot +6. Dodge, Improved Initiative, Martial Weapon Proficiency: Longbow, Martial Weapon Proficiency: Rapier.

*Spells:* (3/4/4/2). 0--Dancing Lights, Detect Magic, Ghost Sound, Mage Hand, Mending, Read Magic. 1st--: Charm Person, Mage Armor, Silent Image, Sleep. 2nd--: Cure Moderate Wounds, Detect Thoughts, Invisibility, Suggestion. 3rd level: Confusion, Gaseous Form, Haste.

*Items:* keen rapier +1, hat of disguise.

## Background

Elkarah Nath is the only son of a human father from Kartakass and an elvish mother from Sithicus; from his father, an accomplished singer even by Kartakan standards, he learned to sing the moras of that country and the techniques of breathing and voice control taught in Harmonic Hall and the other academies of music in Kartakass. It was only natural that he should become, in time, a bard; it was also only natural that he should become aware of his status as a "half-breed" made him something of an outcast

from both Sithican and Kartakan society. This realization might have soured a temperament less positive than Nath's; but instead, the experience, combined with his native compassion and cheerfulness, led him to have a deep sympathy for any suffering person, while also giving him something of a dislike of and distrust for authority figures of any kind.

Given those characteristics, it is unsurprising that Elkarah quickly found himself in opposition to Lord Soth's brutal rule. Being young and idealistic, he quickly resolved to join the resistance of the Children of Wrath; unfortunately, he had no idea how to join nor how to contact any member of the Children. He resolved to settle the difficulty by getting the Children to contact him, and began to compose and sing ballads and epics praising the exploits of the Children in the small villages and homesteads of Sithicus, far from Soth's watchful eye.

Soon enough, his desires were fulfilled; one night he was kidnapped and taken to meet Helvath Makira, who demanded to know why he was drawing attention to himself and to the Children. After hearing Nath's explanation, Makira had to admit (with a great deal of inner amusement) that the audacious strategy had proven effective. Nath soon became the society's resident bard and also took on a role as a spy, disguising himself and entering the cities of Sithicus to learn of the doings of Soth and his underlings. It was on one of these visits that he was arrested as a suspect in the death of a particularly venal tax collector, leading to his meeting with Narwin E'tallin. After their escape, he has resumed his roles as bard and spy for the wilderness branch of the Children and is the key go-between for Makira and Nath.

## Current Sketch

Nath is half-elvish but favors his elvish mother. He is fairly tall for a half-elf and has shoulder-length, dark brown hair, bright green eyes, and an ironic but friendly gleam in his eye. He wears red and brown among the Children, but spends much of his time in disguise (aided by a hat of disguise, which gives him a +10 bonus to

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Disguise checks). Unless most elven bards, Nath favors the rich cadences and cheerful rhythms of Kartakan music to the droning dirges of Sithican music, but he draws on elements of both, especially when composing epics (his personal favorite among the bardic art forms). He is more cheerful and outgoing than most Sithicans; his nature has darkened somewhat as he has grown older and seen more of the world, but he retains most of his youthful idealism for the cause he has chosen. He is a resolute supporter of Helvath Makira and privately rather regrets having introduced Narwin E'tallin to the Children, as he foresees an unpleasant rift arising between the two factions of the Children.

## Combat

Nath has taken up the longbow, as is almost obligatory among the wilderness Children of Wrath, and will attempt to use spells and missile weapons rather than joining in hand-to-hand combat. If forced into hand-to-hand combat, he will use his keen rapier +1 to best effect.

## Adventure Hooks

- ◆ Especially appropriate if the party contains no elves: while in Sithicus one of the party is kidnapped and held for ransom by the urban Children of Wrath. The price of release--the players must free one of the Children from prison by any means they can and help him reach safety.
- ◆ Especially appropriate if at least one member of the party is elvish: the party is halted by Dak's followers and a member (if possible, an elvish or half-elvish member) is accused of being a member of the Children. If the party successfully resists the arrest, they are marked men, but the Children of Wrath will hear of the incident and approach the party offering their support. If the party member is arrested, the Children of Wrath will offer their assistance in rescuing him.
- ◆ The party is called upon to investigate a murder in Har-Thelen or another principal city; they soon discover that the murdered elf was a popular member of the wilderness Children of Wrath, and initial evidence will suggest that he was murdered by representatives of the government. However, further investigation ends by showing that he was actually killed by the urban Children to remove a pesky opponent to their purposes and gain sympathy for the Children. When this is revealed, a bloody underworld battle erupts between the two factions of the Children, and the PCs are among those targeted for death.



# THE CLOCKWORKMAN AND HIS CREATOR

## NOT EXACTLY THE TALE OF THE TIN SOLDIER

By: Asbjørn Hammervik  
(Malken)

Clyde Banolier wanted a brother so hard, he decided to create one himself. Not from flesh and bone, but from cogs and wires. Now he is more lonely than ever, and only he knows the secret of the Clockworkman...

### Clyde Banoliér

#### Appearance

Before he came to the asylum, Clyde was a handsome, refined young boy, of about 25 years. He had clear, blue eyes, and dark blond hair, always short cut and neatly combed. His face was handsome, his smile bright, and he was of an enviable height. Now, however, he has deteriorated to the unrecognizable. Someone who knew him before would say that he has to be somebody else. His hair has grown long, reaching almost to his shoulders, greasy and tangled. It has even acquired a grayish streak some places. His face has become lined with concern. His body is crooked, and his back stooped, as if carrying a great load.

He is clad in white patient's robes, but the asylum keeps his possessions, among which

can be found tattered, ripped aristocrat clothes in Dementlieur style.

### Clyde Banoliér

5<sup>th</sup> lvl expert (clockworksmith): CR 4; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 5d6; hp 13; Init +2; Spd 30ft; AC 12 (+2 dex); Melee Unarmed attack +4(1d2+1/crit x2); Al CN; SV Fort -1, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 7, Int 16, Wis 11, Cha 15.

*Skills and Feats:* Alchemy: +9 (6), Craft (Clockmaking): +13 (8), Craft (Gunsmithing): +11 (8), Craft (Painting): +11(8), Craft (Sculpting): +8 (5), Disable Device: +11(8), Heal: +4 (6), Knowledge (Architecture): +11 (8), Knowledge (Dementlieuan history) +9 (6), Open Lock: +8 (6), Search (cc): +7 (4), Spot (cc) +2 (4); Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Firearms), Martial Weapon Proficiency (Rapier), Skill Focus: Craft (Clockmaking).

*Equipment:* Music box

### Background

Clyde was born in Ste. Ronges in Richemulot, son to a famous and skilled clockwork craftsman. Unfortunately, he became a widower when his wife died giving birth to a stillborn child, some 3 years after Clyde's own birth. Clyde's father was a tradesman of unique skill, and as custom, he taught Clyde his craft at an early age.

His father cared much for Clyde, but was unable to show it, as the grief of losing his wife, and the duties of the business were too much for him. However, his father's skill drew some unwanted jealousy from a close friend of

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Jaqueline Renier, and Clyde's father was humiliated, and they were both forced to flee to Dementlieu when Clyde was seven years old.

They moved into Port-a-Lucine, and his father opened a shop, but was unable to earn enough to make a living, as the upper class, his main costumers, saw him as a crude peasant, frowning at his Richemuloise roots.

His father slowly wasted away, and fell into alcoholism. Poor Clyde, accustomed to getting by on his own, fled into a fantasy world, where he dreamed of having a brother, an equal, to talk and play with. He also became a little known in the town, as he was an artist of some skill, and he often vented his pain and loneliness through his paintings.

Eventually it all was too much for Clyde's father. When Clyde was 17, he found his father hanging from the rafters, on the wire he used for his clockwork toys. This didn't bother Clyde much, as he was already accustomed to living without anyone to care for him. Clyde, already known to the Port-a-Lucine upper class, became much more successful than his father ever had been, and because of his skill and artistic talent, he soon became popular among the elite of the city. The Banoliér creations soon became the latest obsession among the aristocrats of Dementlieu, and thus, he also became famous among the other "civilized" countries, as they wanted to follow the Port-a-Lucine fashion. Clyde enjoyed intense popularity; he was invited to the most extravagant parties and the finest dinners. Girls adored him and the men admired him.

For Clyde however, it was a hollow success, as he found the upper class shallow and dreary. He still longed for a brother, an equal to share his inner thoughts with, and confide in.

And at the same time, he strived to make ever more lifelike animal figures, trying to please the ever-demanding upper class.

But one night, he awoke with a feverish idea. If he could create an animal that almost looked like a real, live specimen, why should it

be beyond his reach to create a human? A living, breathing brother, made from cogwheels and coils.

For months and years on end he worked, crafting a perfect human, failing time and time again. It took him about a year to have the machinery ready, but it was merely a featureless shell, devoid of any personality or characteristics. So he began to create a covering, of wax, porcelain and rubber. He started with the body, and as a sculptor, it was no problem for him to make an athletic, well looking body. Now, only the head remained. No matter how hard he tried, he could not get the handsome, boyish looks he had imagined. He despaired, and left it at the table. But the very same night, he saw just the man, fitting his image of his brother to a tee. He approached him, and told him that his face would be perfect for a sculpture he was currently working with. The man was thrilled, as Banoliér was known as a masterful artist, and suggested that he came with him, and made a sitting for him.

Clyde however, had no intention of sculpting him. He would not let his own lacking stand in the way for his perfect companion, and he knocked the man unconscious, and strapped him to a table. Then he injected a concoction of his own making into him, paralyzing him. He then took a wax casting of him, and let him suffocate under the mask of wax. What mattered a petty human life, when his creation was at stake?

As he placed the final facemask on his creation, the immense psychic energies that had slowly been building up for nearly two years was finally released. And when Clyde pulled the key to wind it, a rush of energy flushed trough him and into the creation. And when he released the key and heard the whirring of cogwheels and springs, his creation opened its cold, soulless eyes and spoke haltingly: "Brother..."

At first, everything was great. Clyde was delighted to finally have someone to speak with, discuss with and laugh with. He named the creation Marcel, and they conversed long into the night, as brothers and equals. But Clyde cared



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only for his “little brother” when it suited himself, at other times leaving him in a corner, while he would work feverishly on some other creation. Clyde had never really cared for anyone in his life, and he would be hard pressed to do so now. In the end, Marcel was just another toy.

Time passed, and Clyde retreated more and more into himself, leaving the world of the aristocracy behind. He hadn’t sold a single item in a month, when suddenly things changed for the worse...

The jingling of bells, signaling that a costumer had entered the shop, waked Clyde from his sleep. His hearth almost leapt out of his throat, when he recognized the woman who had entered. It was the sister of the unfortunate young model for Marcel’s face! Clyde slowly reached for his gun. No doubt, she had followed his trail to this shop. She had to be silenced.

Unbeknownst to Clyde, however, he was not the only one who had heard the bells. From behind a curtain, Marcel was watching. His artificial mind, still in it’s early stages of infancy, was immediately infatuated by this beautiful woman! He stepped out from the workshop, and into the shop. He wanted to examine this beauty closer.

Unfortunately, the woman had no such desire. She screamed in terror when she recognized her brother’s face in this mockery of a man. Marcel was baffled by this reaction, but Clyde was not. He reached for his gun, and with one shot he ended her life.

By some miracle of fate, Clyde managed to elude the authorities’ attention, despite having killed two people. However, his business, which had already been declining, now fell into utter hopelessness. Soon, he was forgotten, dismissed as a passing fad. To this day, however, some of his devices remain in the possession of many rich homes.

Over time, Marcel became obsessed with the concept of the soul. Clyde did not know where this peculiar interest came from, but it did

not please him, as he could not answer the golems constant inquiries. At last he told the monster to shut up, and not pry into matters that were incomprehensible for “petty toys and playthings.”

Then the golem rose.

“Make me real, Clyde. I want to be real. Give me a soul.”

“I cannot.”

“Why? Why can’t you?”

“It is not within man’s grasp to create a soul.”

With that comment, the golem looked at him, and he saw contempt and hate well up in his eyes.

And in one movement, the golem threw over the table of Clyde’s workshop, and smashed his newest creations.

“Sit down!” cried Clyde.

“You are my little brother, and you are to obey me!”

But as the golem observed him through narrow eyes, it dawned upon Clyde that he might have released something beyond his control. Then the golem struck him, and sent Clyde reeling trough the workshop, and unto the floor in the corner opposite to Marcel.

Frightened out of his wits, Clyde fled into the night, but he still heard the incessant clicking and whirring of cogwheels following him, resounding within his head.

## Current Sketch

After fleeing his rampant creation, Clyde drifted for some time. He came to a lonely asylum, somewhere near the border of Mordent, where the warden found him huddling against the door one cold morning.

Clyde had fallen into a state of catatonia, and for months he would not speak to anyone, other than himself. His ranting was not where enlightening though, but eventually the staff of the asylum managed to get his name, and gathered that he had been a clockworkman, and according to himself, he made “wonderful,



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magical trinkets that would amuse all.” They have heard tales of him from other sources, but haven’t managed to contact a next of kin.

Clyde is still quite ill. He rambles constantly about not being safe, that *he* wants to kill him. Sometimes he claims that *he* speaks to him, inside his head.

This is, in fact, true. The golem has a one-way telepathic link to his creator, as all golems born of obsession do. Marcel however, is preoccupied with other things, and does not bother to haunt Clyde on a regular basis.

Sometimes the doctors give him small trinkets that he can play with. Clyde usually seems intensely fascinated with these. Often, he takes them apart, and rearranges them into something else. But when he winds them up and they start to move, he screams in terror, and again falls into his catatonic state.

Among Clyde’s possessions one can also find a small, silver box. Inside one can find the semblance of a tiny ballerina, masterfully sculpted in porcelain. When winded, it revolves on it’s own axis, at the tune of a beautiful waltz

## Personality

One time, Clyde was seen as a master of conversation, and a polite, well-mannered and charming man. However, this was only on the surface. No one really knew him, and therefore, no one would be able to tell you that he often spent hours alone, grieving his loneliness, and wishing for someone to talk to, about matters other than the trivial concerns of the aristocrats.

Now, however, that trait is clearly visible: Clyde appears as a sullen, withdrawn figure, lost forever in his own world. He spends most of his time huddled with his legs up to his chin, in a state of catatonia. He will not react to any outside stimuli, except certain things concerning his past, at which he may react in a number of ways, depending on the way they are introduced, etc. (DM’s call.) He may simply

scream out in fear, and huddle tighter, or he may babble something incoherently.

## Marcel, the Creation of Clyde Banoliér

### Appearance

Marcel appears like a tall (6’ 4”/190 cm) man, with a muscular body, and his face is handsome, with a strong, fine cut nose, framed by dark, half long hair. His skin is white and shiny, and seems slightly translucent, and when a light shines from behind him, one can see the outlines of the mechanics that make him move on his hands.

If one looks into the eyes of the golem, one can see straight into the inner machinery of the automaton through the pupils. This could adjudicate a horror check if one where unaware of Marcel’s true nature.

The golem usually wears fine clothes: a pitch-black cape with hood and a black scarf, which covers the mouth. Both are made of finest silk.

## Marcel

Dread clockwork golem, Rog3: CR 7; Medium-size construct; HD 9d10; hp 60; Init +4; Spd 30 ft; AC 24 (+4 Dex, +10 Natural); Melee 2 slams +9 (2d10+4/crit x2), Masterwork Rapier +11 (1d6+4/ crit 18-20/x2); SA Constriction; SQ Construct, Frightful Presence, Telepathic Bond Zeitgeber; Al CE; SV Fort +2, Ref +8, Will +2; Str 19, Dex: 19, Con -, Int 17, Wis 8, Cha 17.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +12 (8), Craft(Clockmaking) + 5 (2), Disable Device +12 (8). Disguise +14 (10), Escape Artist +10 (6), Hide +12 (8), Jump +12 (8), Move Silently +14 (10), Tumble +10 (6); Iron Will, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus(Rapier).

*Equipment:* Masterwork Rapier

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## Background

At first, Marcel knew only the world within the workshop of Clyde, and the only human he had ever met was Clyde himself. He saw Clyde much as a little brother would see a much elder brother, an omnipotent god, and trusted friend. But Clyde was not a very good role model. When he worked on something, he would close himself inside his creative world, and leave Marcel alone. Only when he himself felt lonesome, would he sit down with Marcel. Clyde treated him much like a toy, made for his own amusement. So Marcel wandered Clyde's house alone, wondering what was outside.

As told before, however, his first meeting with the outside world proved quite disheartening for the golem.

Marcel tried asking Clyde about this, but Clyde brushed the matter aside, telling him, he was "just perfect." However, Marcel sensed the doubt in his mind.

Then one day, three small boys broke into the basement of Clyde's workshop. They had heard rumors of "The Clockwork Man," living with Clyde in his house. And they were not disappointed. When they saw Marcel, all but one of them fled. Marcel approached the little kid curiously.

"Who are you?" Marcel asked, trying to sound like he wasn't amazed to see another human being for the first time. And such a tiny one too. He didn't know they came in different sizes.

"I'm Marcus. I'm six years old and my mommy says I shouldn't talk to strangers. Who are you?" the little boy replied, like children are wont to do.

"I'm Marcel."

"You're not real, are you?"

"Of course I am real. Isn't everybody real?"

"You don't look like your real to me. You look just like the little bird my sister have, the one that sings if you push a button."

"But I'm still real?"

"No you're not. My mommy says you've got to have a soul to be real. And things don't have souls, my mommy says."

"Souls? What are souls?"

"I don't rightly know, but I don't think you have one."

And with that, the little boy darted out the window from which he came, leaving a very puzzled Marcel.

Marcel tried to pry further into the secret of souls. He tried asking Clyde, but he wouldn't give him all the answers he needed, so Marcel ventured outside. But in the dark streets of Port-a-Lucine's night, he didn't find the answers he was hoping for, only rejection, and blind fear.

And so he returned to Clyde. But he could not help. Marcel saw into the mind of his creator, his big brother, and there he saw fear, and uncertainty. He became infuriated, and wrecked the shop and it's interior. Having chased Clyde away, he too fled the shop, and came to hide in old, abandoned buildings and under bridges, living like a homeless vagrant.

## Current Sketch

Marcel has adopted the disguise of a masked nobleman, and roams around Port-a-Lucine at night. Sometimes, he stops other travelers in the night, and asks them philosophical, and rhetorical questions, such as "What does it mean to be Alive?" and "What is a soul?" Those who cannot answer him he ignores, and those who scorn him, he attacks without mercy.

At day, he hides in an old, abandoned theatre, and people have come to believe an evil spirit inhabits it.

## Personality

Unlike most golems, Marcel's immediate goal is not to destroy his maker. He desires, above all else, to have a soul, and to be real. At times, he spends days, lost in thought, mourning

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his lack of essence. He has come to believe that Clyde cannot grant him this boon, and so he only contacts Clyde when he feels like tormenting him, for old times' sake...

Despite this earnest longing for something as noble as a soul, Marcel doesn't really try to attain a noble spirit. He is still utterly egoistic and selfish. He does not care squat for other people; all that matters is his search for a soul. He will crush all that stands in his way, and if it would amuse him, he could quite easily destroy someone who weren't in his way, to. He is cursed to never attain that which he longs for, unless he repents his evil ways and tries to redeem himself. Perhaps will this never happen...

## Combat

Marcel fights like a swashbuckler, and he is a bold, dexterous combatant. His favored weapon is the rapier, and he wields a masterwork rapier, stolen from the workshop of his master. Should he be cornered however, or surprised without his weapon, he is still an overwhelming foe in melee, due to his powerful fists.

**Construct:** Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, disease and similar effects. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

**Constrict (Ex):** After making a successful grapple check, Marcel uses his strong fist to literally crush people to death, dealing 1d10 bludgeoning damage each round.

**Frightful presence (Ex):** Marcel can, as a standard action, let loose a heartbreaking sobbing, filled with pain and loss. Those who hear it must make a Fear Save (DC 15) or suffer the effects. The effect lasts only momentarily, 2d6 rounds, but it is usually enough for Marcel to take down a few opponents.

**Zeitgeber (ex):** Whenever Marcel hears the sound of any of his master's music boxes; he

instantly freezes in panic and fascination, unable to react for 2d6 rounds or until the music stops. He is considered flat-footed, and loses his dexterity bonus to attacks.

After that, his concentration is broken, but unless someone attacks or disturbs him, he remains fascinated as long as the music plays, and is unlikely to attack.

## Adventure Ideas

- ◆ Marcel has determined that he may after all need the help of his "bigger brother" in attaining a soul. Meanwhile, the PC's, one of them institutionalized because of a failed madness save, befriends the pathetic figure of Clyde Banoliér.
- ◆ Strange sounds and movements can be heard from Clyde's old workshop. It might be haunted by some of Clyde's former toys, who has gained a semblance of life, or maybe some other creation of Clyde. Suggestions: Carrionets, Doll Golems or Objects animated by an Animator. (All taken from *Denizens of Darkness*.) Other creatures could take up residence there too, for instance Gremishkas.
- ◆ Marcel is convinced that a powerful magic user, perhaps one of the PCs, could help him gain a soul.
- ◆ Marcel has reached the conclusion that through consuming a sentient being's blood; he may gain a bit of their soul. However, to achieve his goal, he needs to drain as many people as possible...
- ◆ After a long time, Marcel begins to repent his evil ways. After being the party's nemesis for some time, he finally turns, and by sacrificing himself, he finally gains the soul he has been searching for...



# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## HAVE A FEW GOOD CATS

### PLAYING A LIFELONG GAME OF CAT AND CAT

By: Luiz Eduardo Neves  
Peret  
(Lord Arijani)

A wandering family of  
non-evil paka, their  
werepanther ally and  
their eternal stalker,  
blood of their own blood.

#### Introduction

In the Land of Mists, most people associate the legendary lycanthropes and shapechangers with evil. This is no surprise, for the vast majority of such creatures have long ago succumbed to their own evil, bestial, raging natures. Some were born with evil in their hearts and blood; some were gradually corrupted by the beast within.

However, there is a small clan of shapechangers, all of whom have faced their evil side and fought it. Not all of them are of the same blood, but their adventures have bound them together in a way even stronger than a blood bond. They take advantage of their superior abilities to steal from those they consider unjustly wealthy, helping those who are oppressed or persecuted. At the same time, they fight a crusade against evil shapeshifters, and strive to clean up the reputation of all such creatures. Those few people who know the truth about this family believe they are doomed to failure, yet cannot help but respect their life mission. To make things even more complicated, they are hunted down by a relative, bent on their destruction.

#### Background

The Angoriath clan once had a life as most paka family groups are expected to live it: they preyed upon mankind for generations, keeping their hatred for a race they blamed for some unknown and long-forgotten misdeed. They lived in disguise in the city of Rotwald in Valachan. Their fair skin singled them out from the local population and they were seen as three beautiful foreign women who would sometimes entertain guests. Theodora and her twin sister Leona were young, cunning and wicked, and their mother Artemysia approved both their evil ways of being and their regular competition for men, food and their mother's attention.

Theodora was always more intelligent, planning evil plots and subplots ahead, and dabbled ever deeper into the arts of magic, while Leona usually played the part of the seductress, "collecting" a few prizes (most jewels and gems) while having a good time. Each sister had her own ways to do what she wanted and get rid of any troublesome person.

Unfortunately for them, Baron Kharkov eventually noticed the two beauties during a ball in his honor. While Leona was quite charming, Theodora left him in awe with her polite yet clever talk. The Angoriath family was surprised with his marriage proposal, and Theodora fell in panic, for she knew that the Baron's wives always disappeared after some months. Leona was no less worried, for she knew their physical resemblance might give the Baron unwanted ideas about her once her sister "disappeared".

When the date came, Theodora, only 18 years old, was sent to Castle Pantara as if she were going to her own funeral. Her mother cried for days. Everybody was sure they would never hear of the girl again.

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But Theodora was a smart girl and really wanted to live. She played along her game with the Baron, and eventually saw the opportunity arrive, as the Baron's right hand, the ever-cloaked elven lady Adeline, left the castle for a few weeks to attend to some important affair. Theodora seduced and charmed one of the Black Leopard werepanther guards, escaping as the Baron was entertaining some other matter in his troubled mind.

Her escape was cut short, though. As she reached her family home, Leona was terrified with the idea of the Baron's troops coming after them both. She thought the Baron would kill Theodora and then marry her, making her replace her sister in whatever dark fate he reserved for his brides. She turned her own sister in to the Baron's guards. Theodora was bitterly surprised by her sister's treason, and suddenly she felt how corrupted the hearts of her species were, dealing with their own just as badly as they dealt with humans.

Back to the castle, Theodora was executed. Kharkov simply had her beheaded, as Lady Adeline was still far away and he was too angry to let his fiancée live enough to wait for the elven woman's special treatment. Her body was to be sent to Rotwald as a warning to anyone who dared disobey the Baron's law, but on the way to the city, the guard Theodora had seduced stole the body and took it away. He had managed to hire a cleric who raised her from the dead using an ancient scroll, although the spell went awry. Unlike most victims of miscast Raise Dead spells, she did not return as an undead abomination; she woke up as one of the living, but her health was forever severely injured.

The couple left Valachan before the Baron found out about them. When he finally learned of what happened, he immediately sent for Leona. The young paka was frightened as never before, but the Baron seemed wickedly calm. He told her that all the Angoriath's possessions would be confiscated and she would be his bride, unless she brought her sister and the disloyal guard back to him. He ensured her that he would be following her

every step, even after she left Valachan, and that she'd better complete her mission, no matter how long that would take her. He also showed her the fabulous riches he would give to her if she brought them back. Her greed spoke to her even deeper than her fear, and she accepted. The hunt had begun.

Theodora and Lucius, her savior, eventually stopped and had time to truly know each other better. Lucius knew he had been tricked at first, but he genuinely liked the girl and understood her need for survival, and Theodora, having seen a glimpse of what the afterlife reserved for evil, mischievous creatures, decided to correct her ways. Their love for each other grew and made them both truly good, if somehow quick-tempered, as dictated by their feline nature. They settled in Richemulot for a while, and before a year their twin daughters, Agatha and Sabryllia, were born. Following paka family tradition, they adopted their mother's last name.

But alas, Leona finally found them and, realizing she wouldn't be able to drag them both back to Valachan, she decided to kill Lucius and bring her sister to the Baron. After a couple of unsuccessful tries, she finally had him trapped in a fight with wererats, who subdued him. She used a gift she had received from the Baron, an Assassin's Dagger of Venom, to strike him from the shadows, so that he never truly knew what happened.

She took a piece of his black fur as a souvenir and, as a gesture of "sisterly love", gave Theodora a few days to mourn her husband before moving to capture her. Theodora did not know of her sister's presence in Richemulot and did not immediately suspect any involvement of her part. However, she was wary of a possible retaliation by the Baron's part and quietly prepared her escape, taking her two children with her to Falkovnia.

There, she saw the true horrors people suffered under the despotic military government, but decided to stay there for a while, keeping a low profile and waiting for her children to grow a little more. When they were about six years old, she took them to Dementlieu. In the meantime,



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she learned of Leona's involvement in Lucius' death with the help of a Vistani diviner.

Meanwhile, Leona realized Theodora had escaped her and stayed in Richemulot. As she could not find her sister, she became convinced that the hunt was pointless and that she should try to get a life in this land, never returning to Valachan. But the undead do not forget easily, and one day, a few months after Lucius' death, the frightening lady Adeline paid Leona a visit to remind her of her duty.

Leona left the encounter with several purplish scars, but Adeline had been instructed to be "gentle", so the vampire mostly shallow fed on the panicked paka, as a warning to what would happen should she fail again. Adeline carefully left most scars on Leona's body, but she did take some of the evil paka's Charisma away permanently. Leona got the message and immediately left to go after her sister, not only fearing any possible retribution the Baron might have in mind for her should she fail, but also hating Theodora for "leaving her behind to suffer a horrible fate she did not deserve."

The hunt has been in motion for more than 21 years now. Theodora, is fully aware of her sister's intentions and keeps moving, both because she wants to avoid a direct confrontation and because her family has taken the mission of battling evil in all forms and giving people what small hope they can afford to give. Her daughter Sabryllia followed her steps in the Art and specialized in Illusion. Agatha, on the other hand, developed her roguish skills and fighting prowess, becoming a master of the rapier.

Through the last years, many encounters and events happened. About ten years ago, a young werepanther called Rackaj fled Valachan to find his way in the world, and eventually his path crossed that of the Angoriath family. Suspicious at first that he might be an agent sent by the Baron, the girls learned to respect and trust him, and now Rackaj and Agatha maintain a resemblance of relationship, very complicated by the fact that

Agatha follows her chaotic paka nature too much for Rackaj's tastes.

A few years ago, Theodora found a young paka rogue wandering the streets of Port-a-Lucine, and adopted her, trying to teach her about honor and goodness. The young Miette is still having a hard time fighting her evil nature, but is slowly evolving towards good.

## THEODORA ANGORIATH

### "Sweet Mother"

**Female Paka Wiz12:** CR17; SZ Medium-size Shapechanger (5'6" tall); HD 3d8-3 plus 12d4-12; HP 25; Init. +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd: 40ft.; AC 18 (touch 14, flat-footed 15); Atk. +12/+7 melee or +12/+7 ranged (1d4/crit 19-20/x2, +1 throwing dagger of returning) or +11 melee (1d6-1, 2 claws); SA pounce, feline allies, feline empathy, spells; SQ canine antipathy, cat dread familiar ("Lilly"), lick wounds (30hp/day), SR14, spellcasting weariness; AL NG; SV Fort +8, Ref +12, Will +14; Str 9, Dex 17, Con 8, Int 22, Wis 16, Cha 15;

*Skills and Feats:* Alchemy +16, Balance +7, Bluff +7, Climb +3, Concentration +14, Disguise +9, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (nature) +14, Knowledge (Ravenloft) +10, Knowledge (shapechanger lore) +10, Listen +11, Move Silently +7, Perform (dance, flute, mandolin, singing) +6, Ride +5, Scry +17, Sense Motive +7, Spellcraft +21, Spot +11, Wilderness Lore +5; Brew Potion, Craft Wondrous Item, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Skill Focus (Concentration), Still Spell, Weapon Finesse (claw, dagger).

*Signature Equipment:* bracelets of armor +2 (as bracers), ring of protection +1, amulet of natural armor +1, +1 throwing dagger of returning, tiara of intellect +2 (as headband).

*Wizard spells per day:* 4/6/6/5/4/4/3. Base save DC 16 + spell level

Spellbook: 0 – all (including Sparks (\*)); 1st – Charm Person, Comprehend Languages, Detect

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Undead, Grease, Identify, Mage Armor, Reduce, Shocking Arc(\*), Sleep, Spider Climb; 2nd – Alter Self, Arcane Lock, Bull's Strength, Hypnotic Pattern, Theodora's Electrostatic Sphere(\*), Thundering Weapon(\*), Web; 3rd – Dispel Magic, Hold Person, Greater Magic Weapon, Invisibility Sphere, Suggestion, Water Breathing; 4th – Charm Monster, Confusion, Electric Shield(\*), Lesser Geas, Polymorph Other, Shocking Weapon(\*); 5th – Dominate Person, Feeblemind, Hold Monster, Permanency, Telekinesis, Teleport; 6th – Globe of Invulnerability, Globe of Lightning(\*), Legend Lore, Lightning Breath(\*), Lightning Mines(\*), Lightning Storm(\*), Mass Suggestion.

(\*) – indicates new spell, found in “Shock, Sparks and Roar”.

## Appearance

Theodora looks like a blond human woman approaching middle age. She looks older than she truly is, as a result of her return from the dead. Her gray-green eyes are quite expressive, and she has a look of serenity and wisdom about her. She favors somber clothes and sometimes wears a disguise, especially in dangerous areas, such as Falkovnia or Tepest.

## Current Sketch

After a few unfortunate encounters with her sister Leona, Theodora knows all too well that she will not give up the hunt. In the last few years, Theodora has walked away from the path most Paka spellcasters usually follow, and has developed more potent, destructive and combat-oriented spells. She has always been fascinated with lightning and electricity, and not long ago her family had the pleasure of keeping the company of the Forlornian druid Sherlyn Redleaf for a while, as she was travelling through the Core in search for some medicinal herbs. The druid helped Theodora in developing a few new concepts in nature-oriented magic, and the resourceful paka wizard eventually found a way to emulate the effects of a few druidic spells as arcane spells.

She takes maximum advantage of her current spell repertoire as a complement to her daughter Sabryllia's, which is more focused in mind-affecting and illusionary spells. Theodora still loves her sister, but she knows that a fatal encounter is inevitable.

## Combat

Theodora has never been a warrior, and since she was raised from the dead, almost 21 years ago, she has never fully recovered. Her strength and health have been deeply sapped by the magic that brought her back. Also, the delivery of twin daughters almost killed her. She prefers to stay away from harm's way, helping her family from a safe place. If threatened, she uses her invisibility sphere to escape. She is very fond of using her crystal ball, a prized gift from a fellow sorceress, and can usually be found scrying with it.

**Pounce (Ex):** If she leaps on a foe during the first round of combat, she can make a full attack even if she already taken a move action.

**Feline Allies (Su):** As a standard action, Theodora can establish a telepathic bond with any feline animal within 50ft. Once she has established the bond, as a free action, she can scry through the cat's senses and command it to perform actions.

**Canine Antipathy (Su):** Theodora suffers a –5 racial penalty to all Charisma-based skill checks when interacting with canine creatures.

**Lick Wounds (Ex):** Theodora can heal wounds by licking them. This is a standard action that provokes attacks of opportunity. She can heal a total of 30hp per day, which she can divide among multiple creatures, including herself.

**Spellcasting Weariness (Su):** Theodora's return from the dead was not uneventful. Every time she tries to cast a spell of 4th level or higher, she must succeed at a Concentration check (DC 15 + spell level) or lose the spell, as if her body were in violent motion. If she suffers damage while casting any spell, the DC of her Concentration



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check is higher than normal (12 + spell level + damage dealt). This applies to the spell's original level, not to any level adjustments due to metamagic feats.

## AGATHA ANGORIATH

### "Trouble Seeker"

**Female Paka Rog6/Ftr4:** CR15; SZ Medium-size Shapechanger (5'10" tall); HD 3d8+3 plus 6d6+6 plus 4d10+4; HP 68; Init. +9 (+5 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd. 40ft. AC 22 (touch 17, flat-footed 22); Atk +16/+11 melee (1d6+3/crit 18-20/+2, +1 ghost touch rapier) or +15 melee (1d6+3, 2 claws) or +14/+14 ranged (1d6+1/crit x3, +1 composite shortbow); SA feline allies, feline empathy, pounce, sneak attack +3d6; SQ canine antipathy, evasion, lick wounds (26hp/day), SR14, uncanny dodge; AL CG; SV Fort +10, Ref +17, Will +9; Str 16, Dex 20, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 17.

*Skills and Feats:* Appraise +5, Balance +11, Bluff +10, Climb +15\*, Decipher Script +6, Diplomacy +7, Disable Device +10, Disguise +7\*, Escape Artist +7, Gather Information +5, Hide +10, Intimidate +5, Intuit Direction +5, Jump +8, Listen +8, Move Silently +8, Open Lock +10\*, Perform (dance, singing) +5, Pick Pocket +5, Read Lips +5, Ride +5, Search +8, Sense Motive +8, Spot +8, Tumble +12, Use Magic Device +6, Use Rope +10; Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Use Magic Device), Weapon Finesse (claw, rapier), Weapon Focus (rapier), Weapon Specialization (rapier).

\* Agatha receives a +2 circumstance bonus to these skills when using her special equipment.

*Signature Equipment:* bracers of armor +2, ring of protection +1, +1 ghost touch rapier, +1 composite shortbow, masterwork studded leather armor, masterwork thieves' tools, climber's kit, 2 disguise kits.

## Appearance

Agatha is a beautiful golden-blond girl with seductive green eyes. She is very acrobatic and agile, and prefers to dress in a fashion that some people find "less than feminine", for she finds skirts too heavy and movement-impairing. She usually wears black trousers, a black two-tail coat and a top hat, and has her rapier concealed as an elegant walking stick. She is also very fond of several disguises, and uses them constantly when infiltrating society.

## Background

Agatha was one of the twin daughters of Theodora and Lucius. She grew up on the roads of the Demiplane of Dread, moving on at the first sign of her mother's eternal pursuer. She constantly fears for her mother's health and safety, but aside from that she is an easy-going person, having adopted a swashbuckling, carefree lifestyle.

## Current Sketch

Agatha deeply despises her aunt Leona for having murdered her father and believes that she alone might take care of her aunt if she had a chance, but Theodora avoids any chance for direct confrontation, much to her disappointment. Her relationship with her sister Sabryllia is not always easy, for their temperaments are quite different. Agatha is outspoken and very stubborn when she thinks she is true about something, and usually considers most men too self-assured and foolish, but she is enchanted by Rackaj's good manners and reserved demeanor. They have developed some kind of relationship, even though their personalities are almost totally opposed to each other. She is also very close to Miette, whom she treats as a true "little sister".

## Combat

Agatha trusts her rapier a lot more than her claws and prefers "civilized fight" to the way of the beast. She has learned more than a few dirty tricks and uses whatever advantage she can have in a fight. She avoids combat with an

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unarmed opponent, and prefers to humiliate such enemies instead of killing them. Her fighting style somehow completes Rackaj's discipline.

**Pounce (Ex):** If she leaps on a foe during the first round of combat, she can make a full attack even if she already taken a move action.

**Feline Allies (Su):** As a standard action, Agatha can establish a telepathic bond with any feline animal within 50ft. Once she has established the bond, as a free action, she can scry through the cat's senses and command it to perform actions.

**Canine Antipathy (Su):** Agatha suffers a -5 racial penalty to all Charisma-based skill checks when interacting with canine creatures. She particularly despises werewolves and wolfweres.

**Lick Wounds (Ex):** Agatha can heal wounds by licking them. This is a standard action that provokes attacks of opportunity. She can heal a total of 22hp per day, which she can divide among multiple creatures, including herself.

## SABRYLLIA ANGORIATH

### "Dark Gem"

**Female Paka Illu7:** CR 11; SZ Medium-size Shapechanger (5'9" tall); HD 3d8+3 plus 7d4+7; HP 36; Init. +9 (+5 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd. 40ft. AC 19 (touch 17, flat-footed 14); Atk +11 melee (1d4+1/crit 19-20/x2, +1 dagger) or +10 melee (1d6, 2 claws) +11 ranged (1d8+1/crit 19-20/x2, +1 light crossbow); SA feline allies, feline empathy, pounce, spells; SQ canine antipathy, cat dread familiar ("Annette"), lick wounds (20hp/day), SR14. AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +12, Will +11; Str 10, Dex 20, Con 13, Int 18, Wis 16, Cha 17.

**Skills and Feats:** Alchemy +9, Balance +9, Bluff +8, Climb +5, Concentration +14, Diplomacy +7, Disguise +5\*, Hide +7, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (nature) +7, Listen +6, Move Silently +9, Perform (dance, singing) +5, Scry +9, Spellcraft +9,

Spot +6, Wilderness Lore +3; Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Spell Focus (Illusion), Weapon Finesse (claw).

\* Sabryllia receives a +2 circumstance bonus her Disguise skill when using her disguise kit.

**Signature Equipment:** ring of protection +2, necklace of armor +1 (as bracers), +1 dagger, +1 short crossbow, disguise kit.

**Wizard spells per day:** 4/6/5/4/3 (extra daily Illusion spell included). Base save DC 14 + spell level, 16 + spell level for Illusion spells. Forbidden school: Evocation.

**Spellbook:** 0 – all (except Evocation spells); 1st – Change Self, Charm Person, Color Spray, Identify, Sleep, Reduce, Silent Image, Ventriloquism; 2nd – Alter Self, Blur, Fog Cloud, Minor Image, Mirror Image, Misdirection; 3rd – Fly, Haste, Invisibility Sphere, Keen Edge, Major Image; 4th – Hallucinatory Terrain, Improved Invisibility, Phantasmal Killer, Shadow Conjunction.

## Appearance

Sabryllia is Agatha's twin sister and as such she's almost identical to her in appearance. Her temperament and personality, however, are totally different. She is reserved, sarcastic, ironic, always having a smart remark for a dire moment. Sabryllia is fond of simple, if somewhat luxurious, clothing and likes silk dresses very much.

## Current Sketch

Sabryllia has faithfully followed her mother wherever she went. Deep inside, however, she has always believed that her aunt Leona must have suffered a lot to accept such a horrible life mission, and that she can be cured by the right dose of love. This has cost her a few bruises in the last few encounters with her aunt's minions, but she still thinks that there will be a solution to this family matter. She does not share her feelings with the rest of the family to avoid endless

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discussions, but she feels closer to her aunt than she wants to admit, even to herself.

## Combat

Sabryllia is well aware of a wizard's limitations in battle, even for her species. She stays out of harm's way as much as she can, casting her spells from a safe place. She usually stays side by side with her mother, and together they complete each other's magical actions.

**Pounce (Ex):** If she leaps on a foe during the first round of combat, she can make a full attack even if she already taken a move action.

**Feline Allies (Su):** As a standard action, Sabryllia can establish a telepathic bond with any feline animal within 50ft. Once she has established the bond, as a free action, she can scry through the cat's senses and command it to perform actions.

**Canine Antipathy (Su):** Sabryllia suffers a -5 racial penalty to all Charisma-based skill checks when interacting with canine creatures.

**Lick Wounds (Ex):** Sabryllia can heal wounds by licking them. This is a standard action that provokes attacks of opportunity. She can heal a total of 20hp per day, which she can divide among multiple creatures, including herself.

## MIETTE ANGORIATH

### "Untamed Beauty"

**Female Paka Rog3/Wiz3:** CR11; SZ Medium-size Shapechanger (5'7" tall); HD 3d8+6 plus 3d6+6 plus 3d4+6; HP 43; Init. +9 (+5 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd. 40ft.; AC 17 (touch 16, flat-footed 17), Atk +11 melee (1d6+2/crit 19-20/x2, +1 short sword) or +10 melee (1d6+1, 2 claws) or +11 ranged (1d4+1/crit 19-20/x2, +1 hand crossbow); SA feline allies, feline empathy, pounce, sneak attack +2d6, spells; SQ canine antipathy, evasion, cat dread familiar ("Johann"), lick wounds (18hp/day), SR14, uncanny dodge; AL CN; SV Fort +7, Ref +14, Will +7; Str 13, Dex 20, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 16

*Skills and Feats:* Appraise +4, Balance +11, Bluff +8, Climb +5, Concentration +5, Decipher Script +6, Diplomacy +7, Disable Device +5, Disguise +5\*, Escape Artist +7, Gather Information +5, Hide +6, Intimidate +3, Intuit Direction +3, Jump +6, Knowledge (arcana) +3, Listen +4, Move Silently +9, Open Lock +5, Pick Pocket +4, Scry +4, Sense Motive +5, Spellcraft +4, Spot +4, Tumble +12, Use Magic Device +4, Use Rope +10; Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Finesse (claw, short sword).

\* Miette receives a +2 circumstance bonus to her Disguise skill when using her disguise kit.

*Signature Equipment:* ring of protection +1, +1 short sword, +1 hand crossbow, disguise kit.

*Wizard spells per day:* 4/3/2. Base save DC 12 + spell level.

*Spellbook:* 0 – all; 1st – Charm Person, Color Spray, Grease, Magic Missile, Reduce, Shocking Arc(\*); 2nd – Alter Self, Bull's Strength, Theodora's Electrostatic Sphere(\*)

## Appearance

Miette looks like a beautiful carrot-blond human girl in her late teens. She is presumably about five to seven years younger than the twins. She usually dresses in the garb of the place there are currently visiting, and she loves jewels and shiny trinkets.

## Background

Miette's original family name and past is unknown. She was found when trying to burglarize an aristocrat's house during a party in Port-a-Lucine. She managed to escape the house guards but the Angoriath family tracked her down through the streets and alleys, eventually catching her. Distrustful at first, she was slowly won by Theodora's patience and love. Apparently, Miette does not remember her family and background – or does not want to remember.

## Current Sketch

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Since she entered the family, Miette is following the steps of both Agatha and Theodora, honing her thieving skills as much as her recently discovered talent for arcane magic. She gave up Sabryllia's hard discipline required to focus on a single school of magic and preferred to test Theodora's new spells instead. While she looks cheering and carefree on the outside, deep inside she seems to carry a heavy burden or a dark secret of some kind. She does not share this with anyone. Sometimes she behaves quite innocently, as if everything around her were new to her, but sometimes she demonstrates unexpected knowledge of the world's darkest ways.

## Combat

Miette is very bold and self-confident, used as she is to escape several forms of danger unharmed. She does whatever she can to stay between her foster mother and any impending danger. Once Theodora is safe, she retreats. She feels nothing for Leona, considering her merely an enemy as any other.

**Pounce (Ex):** If she leaps on a foe during the first round of combat, she can make a full attack even if she already taken a move action.

**Feline Allies (Su):** As a standard action, Miette can establish a telepathic bond with any feline animal within 50ft. Once she has established the bond, as a free action, she can scry through the cat's senses and command it to perform actions.

**Canine Antipathy (Su):** Miette suffers a -5 racial penalty to all Charisma-based skill checks when interacting with canine creatures.

**Lick Wounds (Ex):** Miette can heal wounds by licking them. This is a standard action that provokes attacks of opportunity. She can heal a total of 18hp per day, which she can divide among multiple creatures, including herself.

## RAKAJ ANGORIATH

### "Knight of No Sword"

**Male True Werepanther Rgr4/Mon6:** CR15; SZ Medium-size Shapechanger (6'4"); HD 10d10+40; HP 95; Init. +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative), +11 as hybrid or panther; Spd. 60ft. (70ft, climb 30ft. as hybrid or panther); AC 23, touch 19, flat-footed 20 (AC 28, touch 23, flat-footed 21 as hybrid; AC 25, touch 22, flat-footed 18 as panther); Atk +7/+4 melee (1d8+3, unarmed strike) or +8 ranged (1d8+1/crit 19-20/x2, +1 light crossbow) (Atk +11 [1d6+6, bite], +9 [1d8+6, or claws] melee or +11/+8 [1d8+6, 2 claws using unarmed strike techniques] melee as hybrid, +11 [1d6+6, bite], +9 1d3+6, 2 claws] melee as panther; SA favored enemy (shapechangers), flurry of blows, improved trip, spells, stunning attack; plus pounce, improved grab, curse of lycanthropy, rake 1d3+6 as hybrid or panther; SQ alternate form, deflect arrows, evasion, panther empathy, purity of body, scent, slow fall (30 ft.), still mind; plus damage reduction 15/silver as hybrid or panther; AL LG; SV Fort +11 (+13), Ref +8 (+12), Will +11 (+12); Str 16 (22), Dex 16 (24), Con 18 (22), Int 13, Wis 18 (20), Cha 16\*

\* numbers in parenthesis are for hybrid or panther form.

*Skills and Feats:* Animal Empathy +7, Balance +7 (+15), Bluff +8, Climb +5 (+9), Concentration +4 (+6), Diplomacy +5, Disguise +6, Escape Artist +8 (+12), Handle Animal +7, Heal +4, Hide +7 (+11), Intuit Direction +9 (+10), Jump +7 (+10), Knowledge (shapechanger lore) +5, Listen +8 (+13), Move Silently +7 (+10), Perform (dance, flute) +5, Profession (herbalist) +9, Ride +5, Search +3, Sense Motive +4 (+5), Spot +7 (+13), Swim +3 (+6), Tumble +8 (+12), Use Rope +3, Wilderness Lore +6 (+7); Dodge, Expertise, Improved Control Shape, Improved Disarm, Track plus Multiattack, Weapon Finesse (claw, bite) as hybrid or panther.

Numbers in parenthesis are for hybrid or panther form. (\*) In areas of tall grass or heavy underbrush, his total Hide score improves to +12 in human form, +15 in hybrid or panther form. When dealing with shapechangers, receives a +1

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bonus to Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot and Wilderness Lore. When tracking by scent, Wilderness Lore score raises to +15, +16 when tracking shapechangers by scent (hybrid or panther form only).

*Ranger Spells per day:* 1. Save DC 15.

*Signature Equipment:* bracers of armor +2, ring of protection +1.

## Appearance

Rakaj is the typical Valachani, slim yet muscular, dark-skinned, with deep black eyes. He carefully combs his long, black hair in an elaborate braid, or sometimes braids it with shells and other adornments. He considers his body a sacred temple and keeps a healthy life. When alone with his family, he prefers to go bare-chested, with comfortably loose black pants. He is fond of jewelry and always wears at least three earrings, a necklace, a ring and bracers, all very polished and golden. He sometimes sports a goatee and a fine moustache. In public, he keeps a low profile, wearing loose robes he can get rid of quickly in the event of a fight.

## Background

Rakaj is the son of a couple of true werepanthers from the Black Leopard, Kharkov's elite troop in Valachan. He was raised believing that lycanthropes are the most evolved creatures and deserving to take of the world, and that the way of the beast is the best. But when he saw how humans were treated in Valachan, and how werepanthers infiltrated society, more as a disease than as bold leaders, he began to wonder if things were truly right that way. His heart was not consumed by an evil beast like the others of his kind. He was still very attached to nature and spent most of his time getting to know the deep forests. There, he once saved a farmer's daughter from a wild boar. They became friends and eventually their friendship turned into love. He kept his romance a secret, fearing the reaction of his parents. When he reached teenage, his

father offered him the opportunity to make his first kill, the farmer's daughter, as a repay for the farmer's refuse to work in the Baron's crops. Rackaj refused, but his father killed the girl. Taken by a bestial fury, he attacked and killed his father. He escaped the werepanthers' justice and left Valachan.

Eventually, he crossed the path of the Angoriath family in Kartakass. After a few, initial misunderstandings, he was allowed to stay after he saved the matriarch's life from one of her sister's endless traps. Theodora declared that he had a pure heart and good intentions. This earned him the attention of Leona, who received Kharkov's permission to kill the young werepanther along with her own family. Rackaj abandoned his own family name and adopted that of his new family.

## Current Sketch

Rackaj has always been the quiet type, very reserved and self-absorbed. He has developed a meditative state that quiets the beast within, and has advanced in the art of self-control. He is calm and contemplative most of the time, until the need for true violence arises. He has grown very attached to Theodora, who he considers as a second mother to him, and to Agatha, who usually fights by his side. He thinks she is a bit too carefree for his tastes, but they have been working on these differences and a relationship is slowly growing. Rackaj seeks his inner light, and to put an end to the reputation of werepanthers and other lycanthropes as vicious assassins. To this end, he usually gives his shapechanging opponent a fair chance of turning away from the path of evil, but he is well aware of the tight grip the beast has on a lycanthropic heart, so he is wary if any treacherous action on the part of such creatures, and mercilessly kills them if they don't take the chance offered.

## Combat

Rackaj never uses weapons. He has adapted his natural claw attacks to unarmed combat techniques and fights this way both as human and hybrid. He rarely changes to animal



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form, though, as he thinks he should not defile his own body with his basic, animal features and needs, except for his hunting moments, alone in the forest. He hunts a lot to compensate for the lack of humanoid flesh in his diet, but still prefers to hunt in human form. He has developed the Scent special quality through active training.

**Pounce (Ex):** If he leaps on a foe during the first round of combat, Rackaj can make a full attack even if he already taken a move action.

**Improved Grab (Ex):** To use this ability, Rackaj must hit with its bite attack. If he gets a hold, he can rake. He rarely uses this ability, unless involved in a serious, difficult fight.

**Curse of Lycanthropy (Su):** bite or claw attack, as hybrid or panther. Fortitude DC 15 to resist.

## LEONA ANGORIATH

### "Black Sheep"

**Female Paka Rog5/Ass5:** CR15; SZ Medium-size Shapechanger (5'6" tall); HD 3d8+9 plus 5d6+15 plus 5d6+15; HP 81; Init. +10 (+6 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd. 40ft.; AC 21 (touch 18, flat-footed 21); Atk +8/+3 +16/+11 melee (1d4+2/crit 19-20/x2, +2 assassin's dagger of venom) or +14/+9 (1d6+1, 2 claws) or +15 ranged (1d4+1/crit 19-20/x2, +1 hand crossbow); SA death attack (Fort DC17), feline allies, feline empathy, pounce, sneak attack +6d6, spells; SQ canine antipathy, evasion, lick wounds (26hp), poison use, SR14, uncanny dodge; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +19, Will +7; Str 12, Dex 22, Con 16, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 18.

*Skills and Feats:* Alchemy +8, Appraise +8, Balance +12, Bluff +9, Climb +11\*, Concentration +5, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +8\*, Escape Artist +7, Heal +4, Hide +11, Innuendo +5, Intimidate +6, Intuit Direction +5, Jump +6, Knowledge (Nobility and Royalty) +5, Listen +7, Move Silently +10, Open Lock +14\*, Perform (dance, drama, singing) +7, Pick Pocket +12, Scry +8, Sense Motive +5, Spellcraft +7, Spot +7, Tumble +13,

Use Magic Device +9, Use Rope +11, Wilderness Lore +5; Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Finesse (claw, dagger).

\* Leona receives a +2 circumstance bonus to these skills when using her special equipment.

*Signature Equipment:* +2 assassin's dagger of venom (casts poison 1/day, adds +1 to DC of Fort check against death attack), bracelets of armor +2 (as bracers), ring of mind shielding, ring of protection +2, brooch of persuasion (as circlet), scarf of Charisma +2 (as cloak), masterwork thieves' tools, disguise kit, climber's kit.

*Assassin spells per day:* 2/2/1. Base DC 13 + spell level

## Appearance

Leona looks like a light blonde human woman in her late 30s, with a rather excessive care for details about her personal appearance. She prefers to dress as one of the local Dementlieuse aristocracy, and sometimes she favors exotic clothing that may give her an air of mystery, usually a veil or semitransparent scarf. No matter what she is currently wearing, she always carries an ornamental bloodstone brooch carved as a black cat's face with ruby eyes. If she has a weakness, it is her love for gems and jewels, and she is rarely, if ever, seen without some.

## Background

Leona was paving her way to become a seductress and thief among the nobility, but Theodora's wedding and escape changed everything. Lady Adeline's treatment on her changed her views on mankind and life in a deep, dark way.

## Current Sketch

Leona is a mysterious woman, her face a mask of nobility and wisdom, covering intense hatred, jealousy and fury. In her black heart she constantly schemes plots under plots, planning

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the fall of her sister, whom she blames for her fate. Her encounter with Lady Adeline left her with more inner scars than she cares to admit. Her soul was sapped in such a way that she feels even more contempt for humans than the average Paka. She envies those who are happy and live peaceful lives, and besides her self-appointed life mission, she delights in creating havoc among mankind.

Leona currently lives in Port-a-Lucine and from that city she commands a guild of mercenaries she has gathered along the last years. Most of them are warriors and thieves who know little about her true goals and believe they are members of a Dementlieuse thieves' guild with international ramifications. As Leona usually sends them on missions of thievery, murder and espionage in neighboring domains, little do they suspect that she is actually mapping the activities of her own family through their services. Leona's guild is small enough so that, apparently, neither Dominic nor the Brain have taken particular interest on her yet, and she has been careful enough to avoid any connections between the guild's activities and her public figure, that of a rich and bored Valachani aristocrat. She does not know if any of her minions is an agent of either mastermind, but she constantly tests their loyalty.

## Combat

Leona fights dirty and uses everything she can to be on the upper side. She avoids direct combat, especially with the Angoriath clan, but she has managed to hurt Sabryillia and Agatha once. She prefers to send her minions first to confuse and tire her enemies down before moving to attack. When she effectively enters the battle, she will try first to strike with her magical dagger, and only if battle goes badly will she use her claws.

**Pounce (Ex):** If she leaps on a foe during the first round of combat, she can make a full attack even if she already taken a move action.

**Feline Allies (Su):** As a standard action, Leona can establish a telepathic bond with any feline animal within 50ft. Once she has established the bond, as a free action, she can scry through the cat's senses and command it to perform actions.

**Canine Antipathy (Su):** Leona suffers a -5 racial penalty to all Charisma-based skill checks when interacting with canine creatures.

**Lick Wounds (Ex):** Leona can heal wounds by licking them. This is a standard action that provokes attacks of opportunity. She can heal a total of 26hp per day, which she can divide among multiple creatures, including herself.





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## KEITH DE LALUNE

### ANOTHER PIOUS ONE FALLEN TO CORRUPTION...

Stained glass windows  
keep the cold outside  
While the hypocrites hide  
inside  
With the lies of statues  
in their minds

-- John Lyndon, excerpts from "Religion"

By: Joel Paquin  
(Gotten Grabmal)

Once a devoted young  
novice, the head of  
Karina's Church of Ezra  
has fallen and now walks  
the world as an informant  
of the dread Kargatane.

### Appearance

The priestly figure of Keith de Lalune is one most look upon with some pity: he is in his mid-50's and largely overweight. He mostly wears worn priest tunics and his oily black hairs are usually left short and uncombed. To make matters worse, he is pale, his eyes don't appear to focus in the same direction and his left cheek has two large warts.

But fortunately for him, this ingrate appearance is counterbalanced by an image of benevolence, gentleness and devotion. For his personal qualities, the head of the Karina church of Ezra is loved by most in the city.

But appearances are often misleading and such is the case with Keith de Lalune...

### Arrival in Ravenloft

Keith de Lalune was born and raised on another plane of existence, where he became a mid-level priest of a God of Justice unknown in the Core or on the many Islands floating around it. Keith was then a young priest showing promising future in the church hierarchy. He was known for his devotion and endless loyalty to his church and his elders, and took great pride in such. He was given as an example to younger novices.

He was dragged into Ravenloft in the summer of the year 724. As best as he can, today he still doesn't know why, or for what evil deed, he suddenly awoke in the Dread Realms.

He was then a strong man, in his early twenties, handsome, thin and with short hairs. Many women flirted with him, but he viewed celibacy as an ideal in order to focus more on his religious tasks.

While traveling in his world, Keith went to sleep in a small inn. But to his surprise, he awoke in a forest, lost and alone, without most of his clerical paraphernalia. Astonished by this shift in venue, Keith did the first thing a priest would do and prayed for his god's advice. After a long time spent praying in the woods, Keith realized he had lost contact with his god. This filled him with dread; he prayed in the woods for days, waiting in vain from a sign from his god, until he got dizzy from lack of nourishment.

Keith then wandered like a madman in the dense woods and eventually found himself at the edge of it. From there, he saw a small town and walked in that direction.

Looking haggard, dirty, with an untrimmed beard and swollen from insect bites, it was no wonder that he got a hostile welcome at the town. To make things worse for Keith, the hostile peasants spoke a foreign language. Children were throwing pebbles at him and a

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group of men were preparing to release large dogs after him when an old man in priest robes came, and took him under his arm, and saved him from the crowd. He was taken to a nearby church, where he got shelter.

The old man was Father Daltrey, then respected leader of the Karina Church of Ezra, *l'Eglise de Notre Peindre Dame* (The Church of Our Painted Lady), located in the Commons district of Karina. The good priests took care of lost Keith and he stayed there for years. Over the years, Keith learned the language of the Invidians and the ways of the Church of Ezra. He had lost all hope to recover the link with his God and found that Ezra welcomed him. Today, he still lives in the presbytery with other anchorites.

Under the care of Father Daltrey, he studied hard and soon gained the reputation of a trustworthy and good hearted man. His colleagues loved him as well as the population of Karina. Keith had forgotten and pardoned their hostile welcome from years before and helped the population in any way he could, protecting them from harm. He took the church motto as his own : "Today I care for you as tomorrow you will care for me".

He often went to the Great Cathedral of Lekvarest as the Karina Church emissary and there got a good reputation among the high priests of the Church.

Keith had gained a lot of wisdom and steady counsel as he reached his late 20's. Many came from all over Invidia to seek his advice on business deals, love affairs, family, and other matters, a reputation he still has nowadays.

## Death of Father Daltrey

When Father Daltrey died in his sleep, Keith was then the second highest priest in Karina, after his older friend John Twistle, nicknamed "the Silent". After the pain of his mentor's unexpected departure, when Keith could finally think clearly, he found some joy in the fact that John Twistle would now head the local church of Ezra. John and Keith were good friends and Keith respected him. He thought the reverse was true.

The day Father Daltrey was inhumed, Keith spent a large part of the following afternoon and night praying in the chapel. When he got to his personal room, it was very late at night. There, an assassin aiming a weapon at his throat surprised him. A quick spell of command saved Keith's life and stopped the assassin's jump. The thug fell on the floor and killed himself on his own poisoned dagger.

What shocked him even more was that he recognized the man as someone Keith had cured from an illness less than a year ago. After making sure the man was dead and couldn't be helped, Keith saw a small leather bag on his bed, a bag the would-be assassin brought along with him. Keith searched it, hoping to learn more. What he found stunned him: in the bag, along with vials of poison, was a letter signed by John Twistle, promising an unknown group a large sum of money when Keith de Lalune would be murdered!

Rage, an unusual emotion for Keith, struck him. He ran to Twistle's room and found him reading under the light of a candle. Keith confronted John, who confessed reluctantly that he had wanted no rivals. John felt Keith's popularity was menacing him.

Keith harshly questioned John's loyalty to his church and the other anchorites: *How could you do such a thing? What kind of loyalty do you have? What did you THINK? Traitor, you? This*

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*act isn't worthy of an anchorite of Ezra! Why? Why? Why?* and so on, for a long time.

For Keith, what John did was absolutely unthinkable. The fact that he knew and had helped the assassin before caused more confusion in his mind.

Later that night, after a tense moment of silence, John hinted that more assassins would come after him and that Keith should flee to another place, perhaps the Great Cathedral.

Stunned by that confession, Keith left John weeping in remorse in the early hours of the morning. Keith left the room after saying the Karina church council would hear about the night's event at the common breakfast for all anchorites.

Back in his room, Keith found the murderer's body had disappeared. After making sure his window and door was locked, Keith went to sleep but couldn't.

Drama struck again: the next morning, a young anchorite novice brought Keith the news that John was found dead in his room. John had drunk poison and left a suicide note saying the weight of Church responsibility wore too much, and that he wished the best of chances for Keith. In the note, there wasn't a word about the hiring of assassins.

At least he left with some elegance, Keith said to himself. He chose to keep the night's events secret out of respect for his departed friend turned traitor. After this shock, Keith also realized he was now the oldest anchorite in Karina, making him new head of the local Church of Ezra.

But Keith knew a murderer would soon come for his life. He chose to keep this secret from the other anchorites too, as some could question how he learned such a thing and would perhaps have suspicions on the way John died.

Keith officially left for a week, alone, to pray to Ezra for the departed anchorite's souls, in

a remote fisherman's camp on the Musarde River.

There, he laid traps around the house. A few well-placed glyph of warding spells succeeded in holding the would-be assassin paralyzed. To his surprise, the assassin was a woman! He recognized her as the daughter of a well-known Karina baker. Keith quickly subdued and attached her on a chair for interrogation.

"Your client is dead, you don't need to kill me," said Keith, trying to impress the lady assassin. But she replied more coldly that the contract money had already been paid to the guild. "So more would come, and we will get you, stranger, sooner or later... hope we never have to kill all those novices to get you..."

Keith felt fear for himself but more so for his young apprentices. He was also confused, as she wasn't from the infamous local thug organization called "Scar." He never heard of such an assassin's guild in Karina. He asked himself how he could break this murder contract. "Perhaps I could pay more to the guild than offered?" he asked. "Is there a way to remove this threat at all?"

The lady assassin grinned, as if she half-expected the question. After a moment waiting, looking straight to his eyes, she replied, "the only way to stop us... is to work for us."

Shocked, Keith sat profoundly in his own chair and thought on the last week's events. Women have always confused him, one reason he still was celibate. Having trouble fighting against her charisma and her arrogant attitude, he felt he was the one being attached to the chair.

Tired and confused from the lack of sleep since the Father Daltrey's death, he conceded. "Tell me, then..."

## The Fall of a Pious Man

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Keith de Lalune had finally fallen into the Kargatane's well-crafted trap. The assassin's name was Jorane Amos. He released her when she told him they would cancel the murder contract, should he agreed to have secret meetings with the Kargatane.

There were many of those meetings over the next two years. Jorane and the other Kargatane told him more about the world of the Core, its laws, all of which broadened his horizons. They also told Keith about the Church he loved so much, of how it had become heavily corrupted. They showed him false "proofs" of their saying.

After a few more of these meetings, Keith was now convinced that Father Daltrey had succeeded in repelling corruption in the Karina branch of the Church, and Keith felt he didn't have what was needed to continue the task.

After they had succeeded in making Keith doubt his Church, the Kargatane laid the last webstrings of their trap: telling an astonished Keith that they had "proofs" involving him with the "murders" of Father Daltrey and John Twistle. They also showed him a plan to "reveal" in public that he tried to force his way to a local well known woman, Jorane Amos ... Both accusations, even if proven untrue, would destroy his social life.

Keith, tempting to resist at first understood he had no choice but to cooperate with these blackmailers. Otherwise, he would lose everything.

Many years later, he would learn more about the plot where the Kargatane had manipulated John Twistle to poison Father Daltrey. Keith realized the Kargatane knew they would be able to reach at young Keith in the process, a priest with an irreproachable reputation and with a very bright, promising future in the hierarchy of the Church of Ezra. So when he found he didn't have any choice, Keith became an informant for the Kargatane. He used his high rank in the Church and his connections

in Lekvarest to learn all he can about the Church's activities and alliances. He started slowly, never revealing all he knew. But the Kargatane used the information he had given them well, and soon Keith learned of anchorites being killed or blackmailed due to information he provided.

After a few years as informant, Keith was convinced his arrival in Invidia was a test from his just god, and a test he failed miserably--he considered it useless to continue fighting against the new evil spreading in his soul, letting corruption take hold of him entirely. He started drinking, (Invidia Glum wine soon became a favorite), and he ate more then he should, and soon he became fat.

The information he provided to the Kargatane became more and more sensible. He now seeks information for his masters actively. After a short while, he even started enjoying playing a spy for the Kargatane against a Church he was looking at with more and more disgust, as he himself found that some priests were corrupted too.

## Keith de Lalune, Anchorite of the Mists

**Human Clr 8:** CR 5; Medium-size Humanoid; HD 8d8+24; hp 70; Init +1; Spd 20 ft; AC 16 (+2 *ring of protection*, +3 Dex, +1 dodge); Melee +2 mace +9/+4 (1d8+2/crit x2); SA spells; SQ none; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +4 (Lightning Reflexes), Will +6; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 17, Cha 8.

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +8, Concentration +2; Diplomacy +7, Dodge, Endurance, Gather Information +6, Heal +10, Intimidate +3, Lightning reflexes, Listen +4, Sense Motive +8, Swim +3.

*Equipment:* +2 mace, +2 *ring of protection*, backpack, trail rations, poison pills.

Keith also has all the Ezran anchorite abilities related to the Mists domain, at his level (see the *Ravenloft 3e* core book).

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*(Drawing by Dion Fernandez)*

## Combat

Keith de Lalune tries to avoid combat, especially in public, and use his persuasion powers to calm and negotiate with his opponent. In Karina, he would call the locals to help, and most Karina residents would indeed help him, at least to make a barrier between him and his enemy.

However, if cornered, he will use clerical spells first from a distance, or use his mace if cornered.

When the opponent is near death, Keith would usually kill it with his bare hands, as he enjoys splattering his enemies.

## Current sketch

Keith takes great care of his good reputation among the folk of Karina, and they continue to respect and like him. On the outside, he hasn't changed much: now in his mid-50's, he remains as benevolent, gentle and helpful as before. He takes a lot of his time protecting the poor, the sick and the weak.

For the Kargatane's benefit, he now use his status as man of wisdom and of good advice to inform his new masters about what he learns through private confessions, and what people ask him in private advice.

Keith knows most of what happens Invidia. He has also provided reliable information on the activities of Falkovnian troops in Invidia.

Meanwhile, the Kargatane Jorane Amos has been in regular contact with Keith de Lalune, and her influence was mainly responsible for his private and secret fall into depravity. In 752 BC, in order to give better treatment to orphans, so it was told in Karina, Keith founded an orphanage manor, located near the Church, on Tower Road in Karina. He did so--with the money the Kargatane paid him for his services, money used to fuel a new corruption...

Once in a while, orphans disappear from the orphanage and are presumed in fugue. None of them are seen again.

The fat priest is now so corrupted to the point of cannibalizing pure innocent souls, sometimes after toying with them. The Kargatane take great care of this useful informant and sometimes help Keith get rid of the "remains" of his corrupted behavior.

He has no real important connections in Malocchio's entourage, but Keith knows many persons close to Gabrielle Aderre. Keith has met her once, but Gabrielle never liked the priest, so he was never invited again to Castle Hunadora. Nevertheless he still learns a great deal from Gabrielle's entourage.

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Keith knows everybody important in Invidia, powerful figures and people who know the local rumors, such as the Karina mayor Zachary Beauchamps, Mr. Peter Finhameau, owner of two Karina taverns (an excellent source of rumors), Anton Regress, Commander of the Falkovnian troops in Invidia, Captain Johannes Van Deusen, the prison Director, among others.

Keith knows how to be flattering, without looking like doing so, and he excels at asking questions. He knows how to make people feel comfortable around him. It is then that they speak too much.

## Adventure Hooks

- ◆ The PC's visit Karina in time for the Harvest carnival. There the PC's meet an old, fat, drunken-looking priest, who curiously seems very popular with the local population. The priest is friendly, humorous and very curious about them. Keith is making the rest believe he is drunk, and tries to find out who the PCs are and the reasons for their arrival in Karina.
- ◆ Keith would like to know who is the man hiding behind the Midnight Slasher's identity (see *Ravenloft Monstrous Compendium II*, TSR # 2139). He thinks that the killer's hiding place must be near the slums close to Karina's warehouse district. He asks the PC's to investigate the numerous monthly killings which have haunted Karina.
- ◆ The orphanage director hires the PC's to investigate on the orphans' frequent disappearances. But very soon in that investigation, they will run into problems with the Kargatane (who wish to protect their informant) and with the local justice harassment (Keith's influence on a local politician or militia leader).
- ◆ (After Keith have been in the campaign for a long time): The Kargatane have reluctantly decided to eliminate this troublesome informant. Keith has hints of that possibility from his ancient masters, and hire the PCs as bodyguards, without telling them all they should know about who is pursuing him and why...

## Dread Possibility

As he ages and sinks further into depravity, Keith becomes more physically deformed. He is in fact very slowly transforming into a ghoulish lord, but Keith hasn't yet realized this fact.

*Additional Note:* for more information on the town of Karina, please refer to the Ravenloft adventure "The Evil Eye" (TSR # 9497).





# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## MARY LESAT

### A VICIOUS BEAUTY BORN OF TWO WORLDS

By: Carrie Kube  
(Yaoi Huntress Earth)

"Unlike some Dhampirs,  
I'm not afraid of who I  
am. "

--Mary Lesat

A unique half-breed  
protector of the undead

Born of a creature of light and darkness,  
Mary is very unique. Finding the mortal world  
weak and cowardly, she, in honor of her beloved  
father, has dedicated her life to protecting her  
vampire brethren.

### Appearance

Unlike most Dhampirs, Mary is the  
result of the crossbreeding between a human  
vampire and an elf maiden. She has the features  
of a typical half-elf, except that her ears are a  
little longer. Her violet eyes bear a savage, yet  
intriguing, look that draws others to her and that  
compliments her long raven black hair and  
smooth china doll-like skin. Her frame is small  
and frail looking, but hides more strength than  
she lets on.

Mary wears a lot of black when out  
protecting her vampire kin. She also bears a  
wide brimmed hat and a long cape to help  
conceal her identity as she travels. If her  
assignment means having to stay in one place  
for a while, she will dress in brighter and more  
cheery colors to throw off her companions.

### Background

Claude Lesat was always a curious man,  
and it was this trait that led to the birth of his  
daughter, Mary. An alchemist before he partook  
in a dark ritual that turned him into a human  
vampire, Claude was free to pursue other areas  
of interest without fear of aging. It was then  
when a lovely elfin herbalist sparked a new  
curiosity in him. Having just as much interest in  
the facets of life as well as potions, he had heard  
stories about a rare breed of offspring  
(Dhampirs) created from the union of a mortal  
and a vampire. Typically, the "lucky" mortals  
were human, but it was Claude's curiosity and  
the lovely features of the elf maiden that  
convinced him to help create a new variation to  
this breed.

Creating a potion to disguise himself as  
an elf, he was able to infiltrate the elf maiden's  
city and seduce her. Since then he has kept close  
ties as he watched his baby daughter, Mary,  
grow up. Named after the heroine in her  
mother's favorite book, Mary was just as restless  
as the fictional character in the story. Even as a  
child she found her elfin relatives too slow and  
cowardly for hiding in their secluded cities  
instead of facing reality. Her feisty nature made  
her even more of an outcast, but it didn't matter  
because the elves meant nothing to her.

Tiring of her life, Mary ran away and  
ran into a battle between her father and a  
vampire hunter. Something sparked in the girl as  
she lunged into the vampire hunter and strangled  
him. The dead hunter at her feet, the long lost  
father and daughter came back together again  
and a new nightmare for vampire hunters was  
born.

### Current Status

Living with her father has brought a  
sense of peace to Mary, and she now donates her

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restless energy into protecting her new family by destroying those that hunt them. Studying the ancient books of an assassin's guild that use to live in her father's home before he wiped them out, Mary has slowly and surely become a mark of fear in the vampire hunter community.

## Personality

Mary is a restless spirit with a strong sense of spunk that most people find cute. Unlike a lot of Dhampirs, she sees her vampire half as superior to the mortal humanoids and takes a lot of pride in it. (This often goes to the point of being overly romanticized.) Out of all the humanoids, she likes humans the most. To her, they at least admit they are fragile and flawed unlike some elves she has met that act superior, then hide from others in their little groves. Because of this, she hates it when people hide things from her and she's not afraid to say what's on her mind.

On the downside, she can be a little impatient, but she has been trying to get over this since her father has warned her multiple times. The two are very close and she would do anything to protect him.

## Mary Lesat

**Dhampir Assassin, 6th level:** CR 6; HD 6d6 (36 hp); AC: 17 (+4 racial); Base Attack Bonus: +4; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); SA Dominate, Blood Drain, Children of the Night; SQ Damage Reduction, Resistance, Spider Climb, Fast Healing, Sunlight Vulnerability, Restless; AL NE; Save Fort +4, Ref +6, Wil +3; Str 18, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 20.

*Skills and Feats:* Balance +2, Bluff +6, Climb +2, Diplomacy +2, Disable Device +2, Disguise +4, Hide +14, Listen +6, Move Silently +14, Search +6, Sense Motive +6, Spot +6; Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative,

Lightning Reflexes, Point Blank Shot, Quick Draw, Sneak Attack, Uncanny Dodge.

Armor: Leather Armor

*Weapon:* Dagger, Repeating Crossbow, 4 Clips of Ammo

*Spells per Day:* (1/1/1). 1st-obscuring mist; 2nd-alter self; 3rd-invisibility.

## Combat

Mary enjoys surprising her victims and often hides or will use her spider climb to get a few free shots with her repeating crossbow before running off to a new hiding spot. She knows she can't take that much damage due to her Elfin blood so she tries not to stay in one place for long in combat.

## Adventure Hooks

- ♦ If Dr. Rudolph van Richten is still alive in your campaign (or the Weathermay twins if not,) Mary may make it her ultimate goal in hopes of gaining more prestige with her fellow vampires by killing him. How does she plan to do this? By posing as his number one fan.
- ♦ If a PC or an NPC friend is turned into a vampire, Mary could try to show them the "lighter" side of being one of the children of the night. (Unknowingly sending them on a downward spiral of darkness.)
- ♦ Since werewolves are the mortal enemies of vampires, Mary has been known to hunt werewolves on occasion and may become an ally to some lycanthrope-hunting PCs. Just imagine the party's surprise if they ever decide to go after vampires only to see Mary turning against them.



# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## OF SECRET SKIES AND TROUBLED LANDS

### THE CELESTINES: ASTROLOGERS IN THE DREAD REALMS

By: Dion Fernandez  
(of Midway Haven)

"As above, so below."

-The Rider-Waite Tarot

In the Land of Mists,  
everything is a source of  
fear, even the stars  
above. There are people,  
however, called  
Celestines, who seek to  
bring the knowledge of  
the Luminaries down to  
Earth.

October 4, 755 BC  
Vallaki, Barovia.

Vallaki was deathly quiet when clocks chimed in the witching hour, midnight. Even the rowdy tavern near the center of town was somber this night, with only a few brave visitors wandering around its confines. Most of the townsfolk were huddled in their soft beds, asleep, oblivious to the mechanisms of the world and the sky above.

Midnight was a time of shadows. From behind the Chapel of the Morninglord, one such shadow skulked in darkness. The hidden figure was clearly human, one who knew the workings of this troubled land. Tonight, however, he was not so sure about what the land would bring. Carefully he took a long object from the confines of his dark cloak and

*pointed it to the clear heavens, putting the smaller end of the cylinder to his left eye.*

*"Fates be damned," he silently muttered, "the others must know."*

*He returned the stargazing object to his cloak, then, cautiously looking right and left, fled quietly northward through the deserted streets of Vallaki. Except for the others of his kind, he carried knowledge only he could decipher, knowledge gained from the motions of the stars above.*

*As the rest of Vallaki slept, a long-lost star returned to its position in the sky, at the heart of the northern constellation known by mortals only as the Tyrant. To the mysterious character lurking behind the Morninglord's sanctuary, the repercussions of this celestial phenomenon meant something more. Much more. And there was no time to lose.*

### The Celestines

Mankind has always looked up to the stars for answers to his questions, if only to learn the secrets of what the future may bring. In the Demiplane of Dread, where the spheres of the heavens are not as restless as the shifting of the Misty lands beneath, the art of astrology has almost taken a spiritual bent. Throughout the Dread Realms, there are people known as Celestines, feared and respected as prophets and soothsayers who study the motions of the stars, who bring their heavenly secrets down to earth.

The Celestines look much like anyone in the land, and indeed come from diverse backgrounds, although they are not diviners in the true sense of the word. Like the Vistani they have the uncanny ability to project what the

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future may bring; unlike these elusive nomadic wanderers, however, they do not gain their prophetic abilities from a magical or divine source. As a fact, the Celestines and the Vistani have at best an indifferent relationship with each other, as far as either group will care to tell. In a sense the Celestines are like scientists who care less about magic and care more about visible phenomena, using the stars as guides on how they affect events that happen back on solid ground. These stargazers live and work in communes which they aptly call "Observatories," where they patiently watch the slow motions of heavenly bodies. Most Celestines are a kind folk, who open the doors of their communes to people who find an interest in their arcane work. Some, however, simply do not have time to mingle with simple folk and prefer to pursue their astrological studies undisturbed.

## History: Written in the Stars

Although there is no direct link proving such, many Celestines believe that the Vistana seer Hyskosa was the first of their kind. They believe that the famous prophet, using the stars as his guide, penned down the six signs which eventually led to the collapse and reformation of the world around them. A few mystically-minded Celestines would further detail that Hyskosa gained spiritual perfection by being in direct linkage to the heavens themselves, and the society must try to emulate him if they ever would want to truly discover what the future holds.

Sane heads in the society, however, would rather turn away from this far-fetched notion of Hyskosa as the "first Celestine," but still admire him for his powerful prophetic work. They have a different history to tell: the first Celestine was actually a woman by the name of Tiryn Olenka-Blaas.

Tiryn was born in 656 BC, the daughter of a Barovian tradesman. Even in childhood Tiryn was enamoured of the skies above her home. She knew all the names of the

constellations, the holy titles of the moon as it changed from phase to phase, and the precession of the sun as it passed through equinox to solstice. By the year 735, she, in her old age, had enough knowledge of the heavens to share to a curious new generation.

The rest of the Barovians, however, saw this devotion to the heavens as "star worship," "backwards thinking," "heresy," and other such negative references. They referred back to the barbaric Tergs, whose customs involved astrology. Some even feared that such devotion was signal that the Tergs were indeed returning to the land, and Tiryn's radical teachings must be stopped. With all that came to her, however, even under the threat of exile, Tiryn persevered.

All this was to change, however, as the Great Upheaval of 740 sundered the world. Tiryn wept in fear as the stars changed their positions in the heavens; all those familiar star formations she knew had been destroyed, replaced by new and unfamiliar configurations. On her deathbed, Tiryn invested the power of mapping the new heavens to her students, those who were so devoted to her love of the stars. Without a doubt in their minds, Tiryn's successors commenced their work.

## Midway Haven

As time passed, resistance to the work of Tiryn's students was increasing, especially in Barovia. For the most part, this was because the simple folk were always in fear of what they did not know. The stars above were aloof and unreachable; better to leave them alone lest they awaken and descend something upon man. Wherever they went around Barovia, Tiryn's star mappers were treated as outcasts and "Terg harbingers," at the very best benevolent lunatics in need of some mental aid.

All this was to change, however, one night a year after the Upheaval. Astrilax diCorvi, a student of Tiryn, cast out of Vallaki as a "Terg herald," resumed his work on the shores of Lake Zarovich under a clear midnight sky. As he sat at his bonfire, quill and parchment in hand,

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Astrilax saw a bright streak of light fall silently from the skies, seemingly landing on a hill not far from Vallaki. Drawn by what seemed like an omen from the heavens, Astrilax headed for where the streak of light fell. What he discovered there was astonishing: on the side of the hill was a man-made ledge, upon which stood two large abandoned buildings and a tall, crumbling tower. Sure that no dangers lurked around these ruins, the student set in and explored the three structures. He was particularly drawn to the tower, which when a person stood at its top and gazed upward, he could see the whole bowl of the heavens unhindered except by the Balinoks themselves.

Within three days, Astrilax had sent messages to every one of Tiryn's apprentices. They converged on the hill east of Vallaki that was to become their new home, free from the oppression of those who called them "sky worshippers." Within three more months, the old abandoned compound was alive again, bustling with activity from sky watchers who called this place Haven, midway between Vallaki and the Village of Barovia. The first true Observatory had been founded, in the heart of the realm that resented them and their work.

## Ad Astra Per Aspera

By 745, starmapping of the heavens above the Core was complete, and a detailed record of the research had been spread from Barovia to the learning centers of the Core. Curiously, many of Tiryn's students have found an interesting discovery: in some recorded instances, the movements of the stars coincided with or preceded certain events back on civilization. As an example they cited the summer of 743, when an eclipse of the moon happened in the small constellation they labeled The Misanthrope. Two weeks after the event, a merchant ship was reported to have rediscovered the land of Markovia, known for its hideous beasts. Soon, more star records and events were analyzed and compared, revealing even more startling discoveries. Their aged benefactress Tiryn had indeed given them something more than she could have ever

dreamed: the ability to relate celestial events with earthly events. Her students then started calling themselves Celestines, they who seek knowledge from the celestial spheres above. From simple maps and crude diagrams, these people slowly and patiently developed a unique and complex form of astrology wherein the sun, the moon and the stars themselves "spoke" of future events. At present, the Celestines are no longer confined in Barovia's Midway Haven; a few small Observatories have been created in and around the Core, and there are rumors (the Celestines are secretive about this) that some have even made inroads and built communes on islands beyond the Core.

## Organization

The Celestines do not have a central organization, although all acknowledge the Midway Haven commune as the "Astra Primus," the First Star. Observatories could not be established in other lands unless a signal from Midway Haven is sent out.

Each Observatory operates independently, although frequent contact with each other is important for obvious reasons, especially if events of stellar magnitude are at stake. As much as possible, however, all Celestines have to keep a low profile about their identity as starwatchers.

Commune members do not readily and expressively give out their cosmic knowledge to others, again for obvious reasons. If ever a Celestine discovers an event closely related to celestial phenomena, he dispatches quick messengers to spread her discovery to other Celestines and a few selected individuals sympathetic to the society.

Midway Haven, on the other hand, is open to anybody. Its current commune leader, Druinor d'Yantra, recently opened up the facilities as a hospice, similar to what worshippers of Hala do to their own communes.



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## Membership

As of present, there are no more than a hundred total Celestines scattered all around the world. Anyone regardless of race or class may be chosen to become a Celestine if she meets but two requirements: first, that person must have a sincere interest in the mechanisms of astrology. Second, that person must have done something selfless and heroic, and something befitting the reclusive yet benevolent personas of the Celestines. The Celestines' philosophical and moral outlook means that all members must never be evil.

Members in the society have an upper armband inscribed with a seven-pointed starburst which acts as an identification. This starburst symbolizes the star cluster Septa Corona, the northernmost heavenly body visible in the Core. This identification, however, is not really necessary; for some strange reason everybody knows everyone else.

## Relations and Other Communes

Relations between the Celestines and other societies are varied, but the personality of a Celestine assures that each encounter would be unique and peculiar. Evil societies such as the Fraternity of Shadows and the Unholy Order of the Grave have tried time and again to gain the knowledge that the Celestines possess by whatever means possible, but to little avail. Tested society members would agree that Tiryn still watches over her students well.

## The Navigator's Bliss

The Dementlieu Observatory sits on a high cliff outside Port-a-Lucine, and has a staff composed entirely of reclusive, spiritually-heightened clerical Celestines. They live a monastic life growing a hallucinogenic plant which, when ingested, allows them to "travel" through the stars and seek their knowledge. The current chief of the Navigator's Bliss is a half-

elf named D'Jir Kariskee, an anchorite of the Dementlieu sect of the Church of Ezra.

## Nostophilia

Located just outside Nevuchar Springs, the Darkon Observatory is composed of Celestines who originally were part of Midway Haven, but due to the powers of the land have now called Darkon "home." Created only very recently, in 754, the staff was specifically formed to monitor celestial signals hinting on events relating to the dead city Il Aluk and the return of Azalin to his expansive kingdom. A young warrior woman named Yllana Kryfall facilitates operations in this commune.

## The Veidrava Tower

The Sithicus Observatory was built in 748 as a reaction to a dossier suggesting that the constellations above that elven land were different from the Core's night sky. A tall structure was built in the small mining town of Veidrava to satisfy curious Celestines. The Tower was a flurry of activity in 753, when three moons suddenly appeared in the night sky above Sithicus, and when the stars shifted yet again to mirror the skies familiar to the rest of the Core. The commune's original chief was an elfmaiden named Maegan Rumwall, but she has since given her post to another elf named Markus DuPhoebian. All Celestines in the Veidrava Tower are elves.

Secret Celestine Observatories also include the following: The Hall of Shields in Nidala, Brambleroot Dome in Kalidnay, The Resurgent in Pharazia, Zorya Poluchnoya in Vorostokov, Mahapralaya in Sri Raji, The Gatehaven Observatory in Paridon, Kasei Yama in Rokushima Taiyoo and The Caretaker's Caves in G'Henna. Each of these "off-Core" Observatories is manned by no more than five Celestines.

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## The Celestine Prestige Class

To qualify as a Celestine, a character must first meet the following criteria:

**Alchemy:** 3 ranks.

**Knowledge (arcana):** 4 ranks.

**Knowledge (Ravenloft):** 4 ranks.

**Spot:** 4 ranks.

**Special:** The character must have a vested interest in astrology, and must have done an act of meritorious recognition by the Celestines.

The Celestine's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Alchemy (Int), Appraise (Int), Concentration (Con), Decipher Script (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Intuit Direction (Wis), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (Ravenloft) (Int), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Wilderness Lore (Wis).

**Skill points per Level:** 4+Int modifier.

**Hid Die:** d8.

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Wil	Special
1	+1	+0	+2	+2	OR +1, Celestial Affinity
2	+2	+0	+3	+3	Celestial Proficiency
3	+2	+1	+3	+3	
4	+2	+1	+4	+4	
5	+3	+2	+4	+4	2 <sup>nd</sup> Celestial Affinity
6	+3	+2	+5	+5	2 <sup>nd</sup> Celestial Proficiency, 1 <sup>st</sup> Celestial Focus
7	+3	+3	+5	+5	
8	+4	+3	+6	+6	
9	+4	+4	+6	+6	Mistway Focus
10	+5	+4	+7	+7	3 <sup>rd</sup> Celestial Affinity, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Celestial Focus, Celestial Mastery

## Class Features

**Outcast Rating +1:** At first level, by joining the ranks of Tiryn's astrologers, the Celestine gains the ire of the normal folk, who are apt to leave the stars and the fate they have for man alone. This increases the Celestine's Outcast Rating by 1.

**Celestial Affinity (Ex):** At first level, the Celestine must pick one set of star formations over any given landmass (the Core, a Cluster or an Island). She gains a +2 bonus to any Intelligence- and Wisdom-related skill check pertaining to these star formations. The Celestine may be able to study other star charts by picking another Celestial Affinity at her fifth and tenth levels.

**Celestial Proficiency (Ex):** At second level, the Celestine is given a star mapping device, such as a sextant or an astrolabe. With this she can use her Intuit Direction skill to identify and use the stars and star formations of her first Celestial Affinity. The DC for success increases depending on the weather over that certain land, as follows:

15	16	17	18	19
Clear	Fair	P. Cloudy	Cloudy	Overcast

**Celestial Focus (Ex):** At sixth level, the Celestine gains the ability to relate celestial positions of her 1<sup>st</sup> Celestial Affinity to earthly events, using her extensive star charts as guides, and thus becomes an astrologer in her own right. She now knows the schedule of the equinoxes and solstices, and to some small degree can predict the future using the stars above as



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guides. A Celestine who studies a celestial event has a 10% chance of correctly predicting an earthly event. This chance increases by 5% per level henceforth.

**Mistway Focus (Su):** At ninth level, the Celestine, again using her tools of navigation, can increase the chances of safely navigating through the Demiplane's Mistways. For example, when a Celestine travels through a Mistway with "poor reliability," she travels as if the Mistway has "moderate reliability." Additionally, the Celestine can travel back through a one-way Mistway with ease. Mistway

Focus does not apply to non-Celestines who travel with her.

**Celestial Mastery (Ex):** At tenth level, the Celestine has mastered the ways of the stars, and can now accurately predict stellar events (of her 1<sup>st</sup> Celestial Affinity) a month before they occur, such as eclipses and "star falls (meteor swarms)." Additionally, the DC weather restrictions of her 1<sup>st</sup> Celestial Affinity no longer apply.



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## RED EYE

### THE MOST TERRIBLE OF THE FROSTBITTEN VAMPIRE

By: Eddy Brennan  
(The Lost Hedgewitch)

Torn from his own world  
after his defeat, Red Eye  
now looks across the land  
of Vorostokov as a new  
chance to quench his  
hunger and spread fear  
into the hearts of the  
living.

**Author's Note:** Red Eye was originally mentioned as an example in creating unique Upir Lichy within the Upir Lichy article found within the Kargatane netbook the *Book of Sacrifices*. Since that time, I have spent a little time playing about and testing ideas and details to portray this sinister, inhuman monster the way he deserves to be.

### Red Eye

<b>Upir Lichy Progenitor</b> , Chaotic Evil			
Armor Class	1	Str	18/00
Movement	15 (Br 9)	Dex	18
Level/Hit Dice	12	Con	-
Hit Points	56	Int	15
THAC0	9	Wis	14
No. Of Attacks	2	Cha	3
Damage/Attack	1d3+6	XP	12,000
Special Attacks	See below		
Special Defenses	See below		
Special Vulnerabilities	See below		
Magic Resistance	See below		

Morale      Champion (16)

**Ftr12:** CR 15; Medium-size Humanoid Undead (Upir Lichy); HD 12d12; hp 82; Init +8; Spd 40, Burrow 20; AC 25 (touch 16, flatfooted 22); Atk +18 melee (1d3+6 and heat drain) or +18/+13/+8 melee; SA heat drain, command Upir Lichy, create spawn; SQ alternate form, dark vision 60ft., low light vision 120ft., damage reduction 20/+2; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 22, Dex 18, Con --, Int 15, Wis 16, Cha 3.

*Skills and Feats:* Balance +8, Climb +10, Jump +10, Knowledge (Nature) +7, Move Silently +8, Search +4, Wilderness Lore +8, Blind fight, Cleave, Dodge, Great cleave, Improved initiative, Improved unarmed strike, Iron will, Lightning reflexes, Mobility, Power attack, Spring attack, Stunning Fist, Track, Whirlwind attack.

*Equipment:* None, though his lair may contain some magical devices he has no need of.

### Appearance & Demeanor

Red Eye is a tall Upir Lichy, standing clear of six feet with a large bone structure. His body appears atrophied and frail yet hides great strength that makes most men seem weaker than a kitten. His crown is bald, but wild wisps of wiry, white hair spring out over his prominent ears, making his narrow, pointed nose and chin appear more devilish than normal when compared to his sunken eyes. Red Eye's skin is ghostly white, marred only by several red scars from past battles and near defeats. His most prominent feature though, is his left eye, long ago scorched by the rays of the sun. Since that time, it has burned a bright crimson.

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Red Eye wears clothing only for the faint glimmer he has of the mortal life he once had. Clothing for him is simple, an open shirt that bears his rib lined chest to the elements and a pair of torn trousers, far to short for one of his height and ending shortly below the knee. He is barefoot, liking to feel the powdery snow about him as he walks.

Red Eye does not kill to feast upon the warmth of his victims instead he does so for sport. His soul (should he have one) is so twisted that he believes life is a toy for him to play with and cast aside as he sees fit. He is intelligent, able to speak the language of Vorostokov and has been rumored to be able to read texts.

He shows no compassion and little emotion, but bears a sneer when taking the life of an intelligent creature.

## Background

Since he is the most powerful of his kind, Red Eye is much said to be the oldest and first of the fearsome Upir Lichy. The people of Vorostokov are a superstitious lot and claim to this eagerly, making signs of protection when even thinking of their dread kind. To the extent of this, the Voros are correct to some extent. Red Eye was the first of his kind in the domain, though not the first of his kind.

Red Eye was once a proud man called Markov Niet, Boyar of a small region on an unknown world, long forgotten even by Red Eye himself. The people were proud, yet simple in nature and a strict hierarchy existed and served the pecking order of things. Markov was raised as both a scholar and a hard worker so he could help his people as best he could. When his father died at the hands of the dreaded Upir Lichy that plagued the long winters, the duty and title fell to him.

Markov did his best, though made mistakes like all other men. His first was to

allow his sister to marry a rival Boyar, thinking it would forge an alliance to help trade. Instead he brought a short war when his sister's husband betrayed his trust. Though Markov won, it was a desperate fight and left many of his villages hungry for the next winter. Nearly a quarter of his people starved to death, but his hard labor helped save the rest.

Over a decade after his father died, Markov noticed the threat of the Upir Lichy growing in the region, probably drawn by the swift trade that had built over the years. Many expeditions were sent to stamp out or chase away the fiends; all the brave men that ventured out disappeared, some later reappearing among the ranks of foul fiends. Markov then decided that he would lead the next band, a small army determined to rid his land of the feral beasts once and for all. His eagerness outweighed his planning and he too was lost to the Upir Lichy.

Those that returned spoke of Markov's death; his son Mickael was too young to rule, so his protector took the position until the boy came of age. Whilst these issues were attended, Markov rose from his frozen grave as a beast that put him in it, an Upir Lichy and direct descendant of the first of the race, Blood Talon.

Markov joined the growing masses of the Upir Lichy and stayed at Blood Talon's side, soon coming to the notice of the living natives of the region. News of this carried a saddening and grim wind, hopes of their former lord resting easy had been shattered and now his soul had been cast into limbo.

Eight years after his death, Markov watched his master die at the hands of his former son Mickael, who had grown into a fine man and a finer warrior. His skills with the axe and sword were too much for Blood Talon, who lost his head within seconds of challenging the young man. Markov fled the scene and was chased, narrowly missing destruction in the morning sun by the discovery of an underground cavern to rest in. When he rose several days later, he was healed and sought revenge.

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Burrowing into the compound of his old home was easy as was the butchery he brought on his former friends and servants. One scream alerted the hall, allowing his son's escape, but Markov was quick to follow and met the young man on the fields outside the village. The fight was long and hard, lasting much of the night. Markov proved a trying adversary for his son, weakening the young man greatly with his numbing blows. Only with the strength of Lichbane was Mickael able to subdue his lost father, if not destroy him with its power.

Days following the battle, Markov was tortured and kept from expiring, a day's torture for each life he took the night he arrived at the great hall. Not once did the Upir Lichy cry in pain, only sneering at each attempt to make him suffer. Even though he screamed inside, he wasn't about to let his captors know the same.

Finally, thirty-five days of torture came to an end and Markov was dragged into the predawn morning and bound to a funeral pyre. The morning sun was to be his fire and the wind would scatter his ashes for leagues. Mickael stayed and watched the sunrise and Markov continued to sneer at his son, only then did he speak to the young warrior. Speaking of the heinous acts he planned to carry out on him and his people, how mortal man would make way for the Upir Lichy and taunting him to draw Lichbane and stop him once and for all.

Markov scoffed at his own demise, staring into the sun, challenging it to take his life or let him get revenge for his master's death. His curses turned to screams as his left eye exploded in a ball of flame. Scream turned to laughter as the first snowflake passed his remaining eye. Seconds later the sun lay hidden behind the clouds of a great blizzard. Taking his chance, Markov broke his bonds and leapt at his son, knocking the man's sword aside before he was ready, then casting him into the snow. With his left eye still burning, Markov gazed down at his lost son, speaking of the days of torture to come for him in return for his master's destruction. Lichbane then entered the thoughts of the vampire. He would use that which took his

master's life to take that of this weak man at his feet. Turning to where he saw it fall, Markov could see only crisp snow through his good eye. Forgetting the sword for now, Markov turned back to his son, before him, the village and the young man had gone, replaced with a great snowfield and a distant forest. As he stood and looked on the Zilinya Neshka started to fall upon him, within its frozen arms the Arayashka looked on.

## Current Sketch

Markov, or Red Eye as he is now known, has made his lair beneath the snowfield that he first appeared on. This lair is made of a system of crevasses and caverns buried deep below the snow surface some two days trek north of Torgov.

He has created several dozen like himself over the years, feeding on trappers, hunters and others that pass his territory. Though he had no ability to create others like himself on his own world, he has found this both pleasing and curious as he continues the plans of his dead master.

Red Eye has formed some agreement or treaty with the Arayashka and whilst they dwell on his territory, they do not act without his permission. Whether this understanding was created out of fear or mutual respect, it is not known but does exist. If the Zilinya Neshka passes near his lair, he has teamed up with the callous Snow Wraiths more than once but has never shared the spoils with his incorporeal allies, chasing them away once victory is won.

The area north of Torgov is also a place of great superstition and fear among those living locally and many stories of Red Eye have spread from the region. Why the Boyar Gregor Zolnik has not acted against Red Eye is also a mystery, but those in Torgov see it as a blessing that the Loup du Noir has not entered the region for several years since he first gathered his Boyarsky.

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Red Eye feeds mostly on wolves and other wildlife he happens upon, taking human life only when it is possible. Since his near defeat at the hands of his son, he has gained a little respect for humans and only takes their lives for sheer pleasure; the fact that he gains sustenance from them is a minor matter. Also, he has never once ventured close to Torgov for much the same reason. If his entrance to a human settlement nearly brought death on him before, it may well be his end the next time he does so.

## Combat

Red Eye shares all common strengths and weaknesses of other Upir Lichy (see the Upir Lichy articles on pages 119-121 in the *Book of Sacrifices* for details on the Secrets of the Kargatane website and those for the updated template for 3rd edition found in this netbook in the "Things that bump in the night" section) with the following changes

Red Eye drains 2 levels of Life Energy with his touch. He may also use his draining attack in his Winter Wolf or Chill Mist forms, but for only 1 level with each attack. He regenerates at a rate of 4hp (6hp in 3rd Edition) per round, but only half the damage inflicted by heat or flame and none of that which is inflicted by sunlight. Red Eye is able to spend an entire 30 minutes in direct sunlight before he begins to suffer from its harmful effects, losing 1d4hp each round. He may be turned as Special undead (12HD undead in 3rd Edition) and suffers only 1d4 damage from Holy Water and other vestments.

He also is able to see in any form of darkness as if it is daylight to a range on 120' (120 ft. Low Light vision and 60 ft. Dark Vision in 3rd Edition).

Red Eye is able to summon 3d4 Winter Wolves. These remain under his control for 3d4

rounds after their arrival, they then flee from his appearance and fearful essence.

Red Eye is unable to approach within 30' of frozen animal meat, and he suffers an additional point of damage from any weapon that is crafted by a servant of any neutral-aligned deity.

When he was brought to Ravenloft, the sword Lichbane came with him. Though the broadsword holds no magical properties, it is Red Eye's natural allergen; any damage he takes from the weapon is doubled (rounding up and his damage reduction does not count against it). The weapon is still within the Demiplane, but apparently not within Vorostokov; however, rumors tell of a weapon in Sanguinia that may be Lichbane. Should Red Eye be impaled on the weapon, he is paralyzed until it is removed. Also, if the weapon decapitates him, he is destroyed forever.

Mirrors pose no problems to Red Eye, even those made from ice or silver. Additionally, he is not paralyzed if impaled by any shard of ice; only Lichbane is able to accomplish this.

Red Eye is the new Master of the Upir Lichy in Vorostokov and may control all Upir Lichy within 100 yards of him. This control is subconscious and is a free action. Red Eye also has a 50% chance of forming an alliance with any Arayashka he meets. This alliance lasts only 2d4 rounds once combat starts, after which, the Arayashka become violent toward him or he towards them, depending on the situation at hand.

Red Eye also has the qualities of being undead and has a damage reduction of 20/+2 and any other elements belonging to the Upir Lichy in both editions.



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## TRAUMATIZED SPIRITS

A TREATISE BY MEGAN LLEWELYN

By: Eddy Brennan  
(The Lost Hedgewitch)

Penning by the Vallaki witch, a short guide to six Geists known to exist in the Dread Realms, fully usable in all Ravenloft campaigns to dumbfound player characters of all levels.

### Author's Note

This is a part of a series of articles that will be written in the first person perspective by the character Megan Llewelyn. Inspired by the Van Richten series, they are set to expand upon some aspects of the Ravenloft game and introduce new locations, characters and challenges that lurk among the dread realms.

This article centers on the Geist, a creature template described in *Denizens of Darkness*. Despite the limitations of the creature within those pages, it is possible to build the Geist into the center of any adventure or investigation you may lay into the laps of your players. This is possible with only the smallest of imagination and creativity, allowing you to take almost any creature imaginable and turn them into one of the most traumatized spirits ever to grace the demiplane of dread.

This article contains half a dozen examples of Geists though this is not the limit you can take them to. Read those ghost stories, both those of reported and fictional instances and the possibilities become endless.

### Introduction

*Dear readers, I once again put ink to paper, this time to discuss a greatly overlooked and frightfully unquiet specter known to those in the proper fields as the Geist. Though they share a common name, I am yet to discover the existence of a more diverse type of creature, living or dead. It is in the latter that these unfortunate, though often terrible creatures are found among the ranks of.*

*Until almost six months ago, I was unaware of these beings. Though having heard tales of Poltergeists and other said spectral hauntings, I took most reports with a pinch of salt. It was on a small hunt in Invidia, a land I never planned to enter again when I had my first encounter with this lower class of ghost.*

*After this, I began to study further into the phenomena, making many discoveries that proved the existence of more of these creatures. Naturally, I have added all Geists to those that I wish to send to the grave before I greet my own.*

*Sometimes, I look at what I learn of in spite of my earnest actions to stop the spread of evil in these lands. No matter how much I may accomplish, far more evil and darkness is revealed to me. Though this appears daunting, it is not disheartening, I take strength from these new findings, turning my energies against what causes suffering for others. If I can improve the life of only one person through my work, then it has not been in vain.*

*It is with this adage that I deliver you into several accounts I have made with the dealings of Geists. Though not all are first hand observations, they serve their warning of these specters just as well.*



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Many of the geists featured in this article have abilities or qualities unique to them. However, they all share common qualities as listed below.

**Undead:** Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

**Incorporeal:** Can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, +1 or better magical weapons, or magic, with a 50% chance to ignore all damage from a corporeal source. Can pass through solid items at will. Always moves silently.

**Rejuvenation:** If destroyed, geists have the ability to rejuvenate as Ghosts.

**Immunities:** Because they cannot manifest, Geists ignore any damage from a corporeal source.

## Mary Brandor

*Mary was the cause of my not wanting return to Invidia. Tales of this child's unquiet spirit had reached me at my home north of Vallaki requesting my presence to help lay the spirit to rest. The request was penned by an associate I had made at Hunadora, having learnt of my skills and abilities there, he felt safe that I was more than able to complete the task at hand.*

*My journey to Karina was one I did not enjoy. Whilst uneventful (something I will thank my Goddess and God greatly for), it was not without worry after my last venture into this land.*

*Karina was in preparation for the Harvest Festival as I spent my time there, a reflection on the matters I had to deal with. It appears that my friend was the servant to a family originally hailing from Falkovnia. The*

*head of the family, a former captain in Drakov's forces, had acquired a comfortable life overlooking the Falkovnian quarter since the retirement of Anton Regess two years prior.*

*Mary, Lord Brandor's daughter had suffered a terrible fall. It is my estimate that the death was swift, though not an accident, instead at the hand of her father, a man of quick and fierce temper. This was something I found the hard way, my skills in combat and magick saving me from a similar fate.*

*Wanting her killer brought to justice, Mary's spirit had lingered in her parent's home, repeating the same event each evening at the very time she perished.*

*I encountered this haunting more than a dozen times during my stay, each time standing at the head of the stairs, studying the events over and over. It was over a week before I decided through many attempts that Mary had been the victim of a murder, even longer before I was able to find enough evidence to prove that persons' identity and bring Lord Brandor to justice.*

*Lord Brandor was a strong man and was not accepting to his arrest without struggle, again I was thankful of my skills in combat and magick, and my friend's help in subduing the violent man.*

**Mary Brandor, Aril Geist:** CR ¼; Small-size Undead (Geist); HD ½ 1d12; hp 2; Init +4 (+4 Improved initiative); Spd fly 30 ft (perfect); AC 13 (+4 Natural); Attacks None; Damage None; Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.; SA Phantom Shift; SQ Undead, Incorporeal, Rejuvenation, Immunities, +4 Turn Resistance; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +2; Str -, Dex -, Con -, Int 8, Wis 6, Cha 15.

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +6, Diplomacy +7, Hide +8, Listen +11, Search +8, Spot +11, Alertness, Improved initiative.

*Equipment:* None.

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If seen, Mary is a young girl, aged 9 at the time of her death and small for her age. She sports long tresses of dark brown hair, shining auburn in the right conditions. She is frail looking and dressed conservatively in a long plain dress gathered at the waist with a wide ribbon. During her haunting, her face is one of terror as she is thrown down the stair from the upper landing.

## Combat

Mary is unable to make any attacks of any form, though she is able to make her presence known through her Phantom Shift.

**Phantom Shift (Su):** Mary can make ethereal resonance (see Ravenloft core rulebook) physical and tangible to the living. Any living creature targeted by the Geist ceases to see and feel the world about it as it is, but instead experiences the ethereal resonance of the area (Will Save DC 12). Mary makes use of this ability so others can be witness to her death however her killer is not visible during her haunting, only her.

**Turn Resistance (Su):** As she is a bound geist, Mary gains a +4 bonus to resisting any attempt to turn her and cannot leave the stairway she is bound to, if she is tuned, she cowers.

## Caster of Sorrow

*Caster of Sorrow lived sometime in the late 600's BC. She was native to Martira Bay and lived on the streets as a beggar. I discerned this information whilst studying her, hoping to put her spirit to rest and end her suffering.*

*It appeared that she was the victim of a murder, her body later cast into the waters of what would become the Nocturnal Sea. After several attempts, I was able to converse with the spirit, though I did not learn her true name, I learned that her death was that of jealousy. It is hard to imagine what someone would find*

*jealous of a homeless person, but it was there. Jealousy for where she called home, one of the docks of the growing city. Here she gained many spoils and ate well, cunningly stealing what food she could gather and hide as she devoured what she took. It also caught my attention of how comely she once was when her spirit appeared before me, bringing an answer to another part of her horrible demise that I witnessed twice.*

*She died in the middle of winter, that much she knew, though the year was a mystery to her. Her beauty had captured the attentions of several sailors they had also caught her stealing and threatened to cut her hands off if she did it again. Wandering the docks drunk one night, they happened upon her and succumbed to their carnal desires. It is apparent from the haunting that each of them took turns in using her, and then kept good with their threat by cutting her hands off. Scared by their own actions, they beat the woman further until she was unconscious and cast her into the waters.*

*Though I tried to put this tormented spirit to rest, I was unable to discover the true way. Perhaps one of you reading this will see something I did not and put it to use in resting this poor soul.*

**Caster of Sorrow, Com6 Geist:** CR 2; Medium-size Undead (Geist); HD 6d12; hp 33; Init +0; Spd fly 30 ft (perfect); AC 11 (+1 Natural); Attacks None; Damage None; Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.; SA Aura of Sorrow, Mind Games; SQ Undead, Incorporeal, Rejuvenation, Immunities, +4 Turn Resistance; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +2; Str -, Dex -, Con -, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 17.

**Skills and Feats:** Hide +8, Listen +8, Search +8, Spot +8.

**Equipment:** None.

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When she uses her mind games ability, this geist appears as a washed, but disheveled woman in her late 20's. She is beautiful if her face is seen and has long dark hair, its color cannot be discerned. She is always on her needs, resting her face in her hands weeping. At the time of her rape and murder, she reenacts these final moments before flying off the pier into the waters below.

## Combat

Caster of Sorrow is unable to make any attacks of any form, though she is able to make her presence known through her Aura of Sorrow and Mind Games abilities.

**Aura of Sorrow (Su):** Caster of Sorrow continually radiates an aura of sorrow to a radius of 5 ft. about her. Living creatures that pass through this aura must make a Will save (DC16) or start to weep uncontrollably as they succumb to the sadness spread by the geist, being unable to carry out any other action for 1d4 minutes. Those who succeed at their saving throws are immune to the geist's aura of sorrow for the next 6 hours.

**Mind Games (Su):** Caster of Sorrow is able to appear to the living as a free action. Due to the fear she feels after her death, the geist is timid and does not use this ability unless she is convinced to (Speak with Dead and similar spells will allow a chance to convince her to do so) do so. This image counts as a major image but is a phantom and not a figment. This image is visible to all within 30 ft. Of her and during this time, her aura of sorrow spreads to the same radius.

**Turn Resistance (Su):** As Caster of Sorrow is a bound geist, he gains a +4 bonus to resisting any attempt to turn him and cannot leave the area he is bound to, if he is tuned, Caster of Sorrow cowers.

## Spreader of Fear

*I was in Mortigny when I heard of this unquiet spirit, following a werebeast of significant cunning with little more to follow. Though the creature escaped me then, I can promise that I rediscovered the trail and put an end to the beast's evil after investigating this spirit.*

*The Spreader of Fear was a one of the Broken in life, though his name was long forgotten, his final moments have lingered in the town for over half a century. The Geist was the result of racial discrimination and an unwillingness to accept that which is different, something many of us are all too familiar with. The Geist had fled into the land shortly after it first appeared and sought refuge from whatever evils had been hounding it. The people of Richemulot, already fraught with the machinations of the unseen monstrosities beneath their towns were unwilling to accommodate the Broken One, forcing it to live in the gutter, feeding on scraps.*

*When one of the Created, made of flesh, ran amok in the town some fifteen years later, the townspeople mistook the creature for the Broken One and formed lynch mobs against the innocent man. He was tied to a post and pelted with food and stones before granted death at the end of an axe blade. The whole while he protested his innocence. The tragedy this death brought on his soul has since made it impossible for him to rest and has haunted the area he was killed in ever since. The Geist is active at random, haunting at no specific time or day. When he is active, those who pass in the area feel a chill and sudden, unexplainable fear. Despite my best actions in the limited time allowed, I was unable to lay this spirit to rest and to the best of my knowledge, still active.*

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**Spreader of Fear, Broken One Geist:** CR 1 ½; Medium-size Undead (Geist); HD 3d12; hp 22; Init -1; Spd fly 30 ft (perfect); AC 15 (+5 Natural); Attacks None; Damage None; Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.; SA Aura of Fear; SQ Undead, Incorporeal, Rejuvenation, Immunities, +4 Turn Resistance, Periodic haunting; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +0, Will +5; Str -, Dex -, Con -, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 13.

*Skills and Feats:* Hide +12, Listen +13, Search +8, Spot +5.

*Equipment:* None.

The Spreader of Fear has never been seen, it is not known if anyone has even attempted to see this spirit or were aware of it's existence until recently. In life, he was a Broken One standing somewhere halfway between 6 and 7 feet and gaunt in appearance with limp dirty brown hair and dressed in any rags he could find.

## Combat

Spreader of Fear is unable to make any attacks of any form, though he is able to make her presence known through her Phantom Shift.

**Aura of Fear (Su):** Spreader of Fear radiates this aura only when he is active in the area he was killed and radiates the aura to 120 ft. about where he died. Living Creatures within this radius must make a Will save (DC 14) or suffer the effects of a failed Fear check (minor effect only). This effect lasts until the victim leaves the area of the aura or the Geist ends its present haunting. Those that pass their saving throws are immune to Geist's aura for the next 24 hours.

**Turn Resistance (Su):** As Spreader of Fear is a bound geist, he gains a +4 bonus to resisting any attempt to turn him and cannot leave the area he is bound to, if he is turned, Spreader of Fear cowers.

**Periodic Haunting (Ex):** Spreader of Fear haunts his bound area at random, this makes him a difficult geist to find and put to rest. Whenever player characters pass through the area he haunts, there is a 10% chance that he is presently active, or becomes so as they pass through the area.

## Frozen Wolf

*I have only heard of this spirit through a conversation with a friend I gained during my travels. His name is Johan Smelvig and I have fought at his side on several occasions and each time he manages to impress me with his courage and prowess.*

*Frozen Wolf is a Geist whom legend says originated in Vorostokov, a land hidden deep in the Mists and is said to be one of the largest lands in all these dread realms. Johan told me of this geist whilst we were stalking the lair of a horrific zombie golem, hoping to lure the creature out into a final showdown. Sadly the creature escaped us that night, but the tale passed the time and eased the tension a little.*

*Frozen Wolf originated as a folk tale in the southern reaches of the island around six years ago. It is said that a large pack of wolves roamed the area, seeking food wherever they could find it, even the depleted stores in the isolated villages and hamlets. The starving creatures savagely attacked several forester camps and score men were said to have lost their lives to the animals.*

*As the story spread, the first mentioning of a young wolf constantly challenging the leader came to be. This wolf eventually struck out at the pack leader during an attack on the outskirts of Novayalenk. The battle is said to have been bitter but the experience of the leader won the day. The pack then left the challenger grievously wounded in the snow to die.*

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*Those native to the village have claimed that the wolf kept on living for several days before it died, pitifully baying for the pack during all hours of day and night. Only the axe of a brave hunter brought its life to an end. Since this time, it is rumored that a spectral wolf bearing great wounds stalks the snowy fields of Vorostokov, silently seeking its pack and silently crying for them during the long nights.*

*Though I remember the tale, I have forgotten some I am certain, my attentions being elsewhere for much of it and I piece together what I did listen to here for the benefit of you all.*

**Frozen Wolf, Geist:** CR ½; Medium-size Undead (Geist); HD 2d12; hp 13; Init +2; Spd fly 50 ft (perfect); AC 14 (+4 Natural); Attacks None; Damage None; Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.; SA Mind Games; SQ Undead, Incorporeal, Rejuvenation, Immunities; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +1; Str -, Dex -, Con -, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10.

*Skills and Feats:* Hide +11, Listen +14, Move Silently +4, Search +8, Spot +12, Wilderness Lore +1.

*Equipment:* None.

Frozen Wolf always makes use of his mind games ability, appearing as a wolf encrusted with ice and snow. The eyes of the animal appear sad and pale, great cuts are present in his sides and throat from the battle he fought for control of the pack. At night, he bays endlessly in silence, hoping his pack will return to comfort it.

## Combat

**Mind Games (Su):** Frozen Wolf uses this ability to remain visible at all times. He sometimes appears transparent or translucent though he is also able to appear as tangible as any corporeal creature, though anything that touches him passes through harmlessly. He also appears able to bay silently, calling for his pack.

Only wolves of his pack can hear this call, forcing them to move constantly to stay ahead of the vengeful spirit.

**Aura of Frost (Su):** Frozen Wolf radiates this aura at all times to a radius of 30 ft. Living Creatures within this radius must make a Will save (DC 11) or suffer the effects of extreme cold, having a -2 penalty to attack, damage, saving throws and skill checks until they spend a nights rest in a warm building or an entire day resting by a fire. Those that pass their saving throws are immune to Frozen Wolf's aura for the next 24 hours.

## Rage

*I have only encountered this creature once and believe it to be another Geist at large. It is situated in Paridon. This lost city in the Mists is filled with many horrors, including that of the people who reminded me so much of my homelands taken from me some four year ago. I happened upon the place by accident, having slipped and fallen often a tall ledge chasing a Wereworg through the southern Balinoks. I was certain it would have been my end by I awoke later to find myself in this strange city.*

*It was during this stay that I happened upon a scene in an outdoor market when more than a dozen people suddenly got angry at one another. If it wasn't for the constabulary, it was certain to end with the death of at least one participant. Having looked into the area since the event, I found it was uncommon, but not unheard of for groups to become violent at that market. Having not heard of such creatures as*



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*Geists of other incorporeal undead at the time, I had no thought of anything unnatural in that place until recently.*

*It is with this that I beseech any that find themselves in that dark city to keep a keen edge to your wits in any outdoor market, I forget the actual site, but it was in the eastern reaches of the city, less than a few hundred yards from the Misty Border.*

**Rage, Exp17 Geist:** CR 7; Medium-size Undead (Geist); HD 17d12; hp 93; Init +4 (+4 Improved Initiative); Spd fly 30 ft (perfect); AC 14 (+4 Natural); Attacks None; Damage None; Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.; SA Aura of Hatred; SQ Undead, Incorporeal, Rejuvenation, Immunities, +4 Turn Resistance; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +14; Str -, Dex -, Con -, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 20.

*Skills and Feats:* Appraise +22, Bluff +25, Craft (pawnbroker) +22, Diplomacy +25, Disguise +25, Escape Artist +20, Forgery +22, Hide +8, Innuendo +22, Intimidate +25, Listen +8, Profession +22, Search +8, Spot +8, Alertness, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Leadership, Lightning Reflexes.

*Equipment:* None.

Rage was once a market trader in Paridon who went by the name of Jeffery "Lightning" Larrie, named so for his quick wit, mind and even quicker legs when danger looked his way. Being something of a coward, Larry was able to earn the trust of others with relative ease and never went anywhere without a small entourage of hired thugs to protect him.

Lightning Larrie's profession was that of a pawnbroker and a successful one at that, collecting a large sum of wealth and a lot of enemies. It was by this time that he had a small criminal empire built under him.

Jealous leaders of rival crime syndicates, especially those belonging to the Dopplegangers infiltrated Larrie's ranks and killed him during one of his routinely visits to the outdoor markets.

The betrayal he felt at the time of his death spread beyond the grave and has fed off the living ever since.

## Combat

**Aura of Hatred (Su):** Rage radiates this aura at any time he wishes too to a radius of 50 ft. Though being active at all times, wandering the market he once controlled, his aura only activates if one of more of his former followers is present at the market. Those within the aura must make a Will save (DC 23) or become violent to those around them, feeling cheated and lied to. This animosity quickly grows into physical violence and ends only when one of more person(s) is dead. The violence can also be broken through spells such as Emotion. Those that pass their saving throws are immune to Rage's aura for their next visit to the market.

**Turn Resistance (Su):** As Rage is a bound geist, he gains a +4 bonus to resisting any attempt to turn him and cannot leave the area he is bound to, if he is tuned, Rage cowers.

## The Screaming Flame

*I have learned little of the origins of this spirit except that it died in the same fire that destroyed the building it resides in. It is possible that the spirit once lived there in life, but there is a strange tale attached to the spirits origin that leaves its true identity a question.*

*Shortly after the death of Duke Gundar, the land of Gundarak was in dissolution, being quickly swallowed by the lands around it. This left the Gundrakites largely at the mercy of whoever claimed their lands and themselves. Barovia took those in the east in and Count*



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*Strahd von Zarovich, long time enemy of the Gundrakites, presided over them. In return, the Gundrakites shared little love for their new landowner, or his own people.*

*Heavy taxes and laws were infringed over the leaderless people; those that dreamed of rebellion were quickly silenced or disappeared in the night. Those that refused to abide by the laws or pay the new taxes also suffered horrible fates from those that served the boyars and burgomasters. The nameless family that lived in the cottage that now lies in ruins abided by these laws as best they could, wishing to avoid the iron fist of the local boyar. They succeeded in this and it was one lonesome afternoon when a pounding came on their door. A traveler wishing comfort and companionship for the night stood at their doorstep; cautiously, he was granted entrance to their home and lodging for a night.*

*During that night, the traveler is said to have become a monster, killing the family as they enjoyed the evening. One member of the family was apparently thrown into the fire, spilling flasks of oil across the floor, igniting the cottage in no time. It is not known who went into the fire, but they are said to have died there. The cottage was gutted and gone quickly, it is not known if the traveler escaped the same fate of the family, but stories of similar happenings, including those from scarred survivors lay claim to his escape.*

*In my experience with this spirit, limited it may be, I have uncovered that the person was once a human female, rounding it to being either the mother or one of two daughters the family shared. When the spirit haunts, she engulfs the ruins with phantom flames, whilst harmless, they may prove deadly to those that believe them.*

**The Screaming Flame, Com8 Geist:** CR 3; Medium-size Undead (Geist); HD 8d12; hp 43; Init +1; Spd fly 30 ft (perfect); AC 11 (+1 Natural); Attacks None; Damage None; Face/Reach 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.; SA Phantom Flame, Phantom Scream; SQ Undead, Incorporeal, Rejuvenation, Immunities, +4 Turn Resistance; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +2; Str -, Dex -, Con -, Int 11, Wis 8, Cha 19.

*Skills and Feats:* Craft (sew) +5, Hide +12, Listen +9, Profession (seamstress) +5, Search +8, Spot +11, Alertness, Lightning Reflexes, Run.

*Equipment:* None.

This Geist is actually the mother of the family that died in the cottage. She longs for the return of her killer so she may attempt vengeance upon him. The only evidence the Geist has of the murderer of her and her family is that he was tall, lean, carried a staff and whistled merrily much of the time. This can draw evidence to the Whistling Fiend or another sadistic soul that wanders the lands.

## Combat

The Screaming Flame is active only once a week, during the evening. During this period, she makes full use of her Phantom Flame and Scream abilities.

**Phantom Flame (Su):** Whilst she is active, the Screaming Flame projects a fire in the hearth and phantom of flames lashing out across the floor and up the walls, within a round, the entire ruin is engulfed in these flames. All within this phantom is also subject to the creases of the woman and her family as they burned to death. This phantom is also quite dangerous to those caught within it, requiring a Will save (DC 18) or they suffer 2d6 damage from the flames. This damage is similar to that inflicted by illusions and images and healed if the sufferer is convinced it isn't real.

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Those that would die from these phantom flames fall unconscious, but will die if left unattended.

**Phantom Scream (Su):** Though a subsidiary of the Phantom Flame, this ability causes all within the effect of the haunting to hear the screams of the family as they burnt to death. These screams inflict a Fear check (DC 12), failure always resulting in a minor effect.

**Turn Resistance (Su):** As The Screaming Flame is a bound geist, he gains a +4 bonus to resisting any attempt to turn him and cannot leave the area he is bound to, if he is tuned, The Screaming Flame cowers.

## Conclusion

*Though I have documented those Geists I am familiar with, I sadly believe there to be many more than go unseen by our eyes and ears. The restless spirits dwell in a domain beyond our perception and it is rare that we are present during their hauntings, if we are ever to become aware of them at all.*

*Though I am a little disheartened by the possible number of these suffering creatures that may exist, it is comforting to know they are of little or no danger to those that encounter them. Those of you that read this and use it to battle evil may find it helpful in the battle against many of the restless spirits and not only Geists that stay on in our world. However, it is a great warning that I must share with you that each restless spirit is as different as any of us are to each other.*

*I bid you a good hunt my dearest readers, those that follow the path to stamp out the face of evil in our lands and make this world a safer one for those generations to come.*

Megan Llewelyn  
Priestess in service of  
Cernunoss and Kerridwen  
August 17<sup>th</sup>, 756 BC.



# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## YAGO TREVESC

### HE WHO LAUGHS LAST...

By: Sampo Rassi

Life is not a game. For  
some, this is not an  
obvious fact. Yago  
Trevesc, a loser in his  
own mind, learned it the  
hard way.

### Yago Trevesc

**Male Human 2nd-rank Ghost (Com1/Rog1):**  
CR 4; Medium-size undead (incorporeal); HD  
2d12; hp 18; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; AC 13 (+3 Dex);  
Melee dagger +5 (1d4-1); SA Manifestation,  
Frightful Moan SQ Incorporeal, Rejuvenation,  
Turn Resistance +4, Zone of Silence; AL NE;  
SV Fort +0, Ref +5, Wil -1; Str 8, Dex 16, Con -  
-, Int 13, Wis 9, Cha 14.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +1, Craft (Carpentry)  
+3, Hide +15, Listen +11, Move Silently +6,  
Profession (Farmer) +3, Search +12, Spot +11;  
Alertness, Weapon Finesse (dagger)

*Equipment:* None

### Appearance

When manifesting, Yago Trevesc looks  
very much the same in death as he did in life. He  
is a thin, black-haired man with a cruel visage  
and dirty clothes.

What makes Yago's condition apparent  
is his mouth, which has been sewn shut with  
black thread. Despite this, he still is able to make  
a hoarse mumble, which sounds quite terrible.

The punctures on his lips bleed  
constantly and the blood drips on his clothes,  
adding to his terrifying appearance.

### Background

In every society, there are those who,  
starting from early childhood, notice that they  
are not as strong or as smart as the other  
children. Most learn to compensate. Yago  
Trevesc, the only son of a seed merchant in a  
small village, was one of those children.

As a boy Yago was often sick, and his  
weakness made him an easy target for the bullies  
of his village. The thin and lanky child soon  
learned to run fast and think of all sorts of dirty  
tricks to avoid being beaten regularly.

The bullied boy grew into a malicious  
young man, rendered selfish and uncaring by his  
troubled childhood. Yago's father gave him a  
small patch of land to farm, but he was ill-suited  
for the intense physical labor of the farmer's  
profession. Yago sold the land and left the  
village, deciding to seek his fortune in the wide  
world.

Driven by his desire to prove himself,  
Yago became a bandit. In his eyes, it was the  
perfect profession. His physical frailties did not  
matter, as people gave him their valuables when  
threatened with a crossbow, no matter what  
manner of a man was holding it.

Yago's days of success were few,  
however. Soon a large gang of robbers and  
bandits learned of the solitary newcomer on their  
territory and decided to teach him a lesson. The  
senior bandits had little trouble locating the  
young upstart, and proceeded to teach him his

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lesson by beating him unconscious. To Yago, it appeared that his intelligence was once again defeated by brute force. Bloodstained and defeated, he wandered to Kreslav, the nearest town. There he took the only available job, that of a gravedigger.

Slowly, Yago's sense of defeat turned into a form of madness. He started to laugh bitterly at the meaninglessness of it all as he dug up the sour earth. The townsfolk regarded him an odd fellow but let him be, knowing better than to mix themselves in the affairs of a man so apparently insane.

As the madness took an increasing toll on his psyche, Yago began to dress solely in black and walk everywhere with his shovel carried on one shoulder. He became a somber man, only smiling when he dug another grave. And as Yago dug, he laughed, a horrible laugh of victory and joy in the misfortune of another. To him, every corpse became a defeated adversary and every grave a mark of his triumph.

The state of things remained much the same until one cold autumn night when the wife of a beloved tailor was attacked and killed by a vampire. She was a warm-hearted woman with compassion for all. The entire town was in mourning.

All except Yago Trevesc.

The funeral was held, on a stormy day, with sharp winds whipping the clothes of the attendants. All who were able were present, sharing the sorrow of one of their own. The gravedigger waited for his turn a few steps away, leaning on a gnarled old tree that grew in the center of the graveyard. He giggled to himself.

As the mourners departed until only the tailor remained, Yago began his work. Despite his weak frame, he felt no fatigue. He was the winner, alive while others were dead.

A devoted husband and a loving father, the tailor was stricken with grief and could not leave the graveyard. He watched in silence, as the grave got deeper.

Then he heard something, possibly a trick of the wind, but it sounded like a giggle. Not sure of his senses, he said nothing.

Soon, the sound repeated itself, louder. This time the tailor was sure.

"Do you find this amusing?" he asked, but Yago said nothing.

A few minutes went by in relative silence, but then a scrap of laughter could once more be heard.

"Hold your tongue, fool, or I'll make sure you'll laugh no more!" the tailor yelled, growing furious.

Having said that, he turned his back and left. After he had gone twenty paces, he heard Yago laugh out loud, a sound that chilled his bones. Remembering his words, but deciding to bide his time, the tailor walked away.

After the grave was filled, Yago stood on the edge, reveling in his feeling of superiority.

It was there that the tailor and a pair of his friends found him.

Troubled and angry beyond words, the tailor had gone into the local tavern, where he found a few of his fellow citizens. He had told them of the gravedigger and his disrespect for the memory of his departed wife. Together the men had come to the conclusion that the madman needed to learn that the tailor was a man of his word.

Finding Yago in the cemetery, the two men held him down as the tailor set to work fulfilling his grim promise. Using a large needle and coarse string, he sewed the gravedigger's mouth shut.

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Yago tried to struggle, but the arms holding him down were too powerful. As a last resort, Yago reached for a dagger hidden inside his coat. One of the tailor's companions, the town blacksmith, quickly noticed this and grabbed the handle of the weapon.

Had Yago accepted his defeat at this point, his life might have been spared; but he refused to be beaten down this time. Powered by the madness that burned in his soul, he held on to the knife as the blacksmith tried to wrench it away. The blade slipped and struck Yago between his ribs.

The tailor and his comrades saw that their vengeance had gone too far. Silent, they released the dying man and fled the scene.

Lying on the wet ground, Yago cursed all creation for his misfortune. He wanted to scream defiance to the sky itself, but could not. The tailor had done his job well. In his mind, Yago hoped for only one thing: a chance to come back and have his vengeance.

The Powers of Ravenloft heard him and raised him as a ghost, forever doomed to haunt the cemetery, moaning through lips sewn together.

## Personality

Alive, Yago Trevesc suffered from a severe inferiority complex. He wanted to prove his worth to everyone else and above all to himself. When his attempts were thwarted, he first became bitter and then insane.

Yago began to see life as some manner of bizarre game, with survival its only goal. He derived enjoyment from the suffering of others, feeling superior to them because he was still alive and well.

Now, in death, Yago's feelings of loss have redoubled. After all, he has lost the game. All that is left to him is revenge. He wants

desperately to kill the tailor and the two men who assisted him, but will attack anyone else who comes to the cemetery, in an effort to take away from others what he has already lost.

## Combat

Yago will attack anyone who enters the cemetery. The townsfolk have therefore barred the gate. Few people dare to live near the old graveyard, in fear of the Mute Ghost, as he is called.

The Powers have bound Yago's soul to the cemetery to further enhance his torment and to make it impossible for him to have his revenge.

Yago will use his frightful moan ability before entering combat. He has already realized that his undead status makes him effectively immortal and thus will not flee under normal circumstances.

The only way to permanently rid the town of Yago's haunting is to find his unmarked grave and carefully remove the string that still holds the lips of his amazingly well-preserved corpse together.

**Manifestation (Su):** As an ethereal creature, Yago cannot affect or be affected by anything in the material world. When he manifests, he becomes visible but remains incorporeal. However, as a manifested ghost he can strike opponents with his dagger.

**Zone of Silence (Su):** The entire graveyard of Kreslav is bathed in an eerie magical silence. It is not strong enough to stop spell casting or discussion, but it will filter out singing birds, rustling leaves and other environmental sounds.

**Frightful Moan (Su):** Yago can moan as a standard action. All living creatures within a 50-foot spread must succeed at a Will save or become panicked for 2d4 rounds. This is a sonic, necromantic, mind-affecting fear effect. A

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creature that successfully saves against the moan cannot be affected by Yago's moan for one day. Saves against all of Yago's special attacks have a DC of 14.

## Adventure Notes

Yago Trevesc is a pitiful example of a ghost. He was a feeble man when he was alive and remains feeble in undeath. Against skilled ghost-hunters, he doesn't stand a chance. Beginning adventurers, especially ones not equipped for dealing with incorporeal undead, are advised to step lightly, however.

I've purposefully left the actual location of the town of Kreslav very vague. DM's can throw it to whatever corner of whatever domain they like best.

In any case, the townsfolk of Kreslav are tired of the ghostly presence in their own back yard and are probably willing to pay for someone to get rid of the problem.





People, good or bad...

Mythica Nephos

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## CARNIVAL: Boss Canvas Man MORE ACTS TO FILL YOUR STRAW HOUSE

By: Tami Sammons

Because I could not stop  
for Death,  
He kindly stopped for me;  
The carriage held but  
just ourselves  
And Immortality.

---Emily Dickinson  
Because I could not stop for Death, stanza 1

Carnivals, Circuses, side  
shows. Are they real or  
are they just done with  
makeup and mirrors? How  
we love them though.  
Though we may not admit  
this aloud. But, in the  
deep recesses of our  
souls we yearn for them.

### Prelude

It was a cold day; the sky was cloudless;  
the grass brown, and the sun hung low in the  
sky. The first snow could be smelled by the  
residents of Morfenzi on the eastern foothills in  
Falkovia. Morfenzi is a large city

The downtrodden people walk about the  
city in their drab clothing, being overworked,  
just to have their hard earned money to be taken  
away till they have barely enough to live, and  
then terrorized by the darklord's troupes.

But today was different somehow. There  
was something in the air. And everyone seemed  
to notice it. Some people seemed to walk with  
their head higher than normal, as if to see if they

were trying to hear something. And some seem  
to hide deeper into their coats.

This is what a young man, about 25 but  
looked 35, with unkempt shoulder-length hair,  
and a brand of a hawk on his forehead (like  
everyone else had), noticed as he walked home  
from his job at the bakery, a small bundle  
underneath his arm and a small porcelain jug  
with a cork stopper in his hand. He felt it too, a  
sense of hope.

Then he noticed something nailed to the  
side of a building. It was a piece of paper. He  
took the paper down from the building wall and  
looked at it. There were no words on it, not that  
he could have read them anyway, just a picture.  
But it was no ordinary picture. It was obviously  
magical. It had swirling images of strange  
looking people with colorful clothing and wide  
smiles. The man's dull eyes lit up for the first  
time in his life.

Noticing his joy, a militia guard nearby  
stormed over to the man and ripped the paper  
from his hand, and shoving him up against the  
wall of the building, making him drop his  
bundle and the jug, which remarkably didn't  
break.

"What is this?" he demanded, angrily.

"Just something I found nailed to the  
wall, sir," the young man whispered, the  
dullness returning to his eyes.

The guard looked at the paper of  
swirling images mesmerized. The young man  
took advantage of the situation, picked up his  
bundle and jug and walked slowly away,  
depressed. He liked the pictures. He stuck his  
free hand in his pocket, and felt something there.  
He pulled out a piece of paper, just like the one  
the guard took from him. He stuck it quickly  
back into his pocket, hoping no one saw, and ran  
home.

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He placed the jug and bundle on the his counter and opened it, stale bread from the bakery he works at. Then he cut a hunk of cheese off of a roll in his cupboard. He took the stopper out of the jug, hot broth with a hunk of pig fat in it. He placed them on a dull white porcelain plate with chips around the edge. Then he placed it on his unfinished, warped kitchen table along with a spoon. He then grabbed a dented silver mug and filled it with wine, cheap wine, then sat down to eat. He stared at the picture in his hand as he absently ate. The colorfully dressed figures in the pictures smiled at him. But there was one that caught his eye. He was exotic, with dark skin, tattoos, earrings and a smile to die for.

Then he heard a noise outside his small home. It sounded like a ruckus, like the militia make when they arrest someone. He went and looked out his small, dirty front window. It was early morning. Where had yesterday gone? He thought. He opened the front door and stepped outside. He saw no militia, just citizens. They were mumbling amongst themselves. There was only one thing he could understand amongst the other indistinct words, "Carnival."

## Circus Lingo

**Boss Canvas Man:** the man whose job is to decide exactly where and how the tents should be put up at a new circus lot.

**First of May:** A rookie on the circus. A person in their first season with the show.

**Funambulist:** a tightrope walker.

**Gilly:** anyone not connected with the circus; an outsider.

**Guys:** heavy ropes or cables that help to support poles or high wire rigging.

**Straw House:** a sold out circus performance

**Kinker:** any experienced circus performer; the name comes from tumblers who worked the kinks out of sore muscles after exercise.

**Midway :** The area outside of the entrance to the main tent, typically lined with concessionaires.

**Tear Down :**Take down equipment and ready the circus for moving.

## Act One

We slowly drove, he knew  
no haste,  
And I had put away  
My labor, and my leisure  
too,  
For his civility.

---Emily Dickinson

Because I could not stop for Death, stanza 2

## Your Humble Servant

"A thousand, thousand welcomes, noble one! May Fate smile upon you and bring you to Enlightenment, and may you have joy of your visit here in Carnival. I am Najib. And I grew up in Zakhara, the Land of Fate. On a world and a plane of existence far from here where the setting of the sun does not bring dread and horror. I could tell you wondrous stories of voyages far and near, of powerful sha'irs and their wondrous genies, of beautiful veiled ladies, of desert sheikhs, of Caliphs and Sultans, their Viziers and harems, and all the wondrous things the world I come from has to offer.

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“However, it has been commanded by my esteemed mistress that this unworthy one should be your guide this evening through the menagerie of the strange and unusual, the beautiful and the horrible, the friendly and the fearsome, the human and the inhuman. So come, stranger, and for a few coppers you can taste delights for all the senses.”

The young man with the unkempt hair and newly lit eyes stared at the handsome exotic barker. He was one of those in the flyer. The one that caught his eye. They stood eye to eye. This 6’ tall half-elven man in his mid-20s with dark tanned skin, straight black hair short and neat with a colorful headscarf and a well-groomed goatee and mustache.

Najib took no money from the young man with the unkempt hair.

A wave of disappointment flowed over the young man. He wanted to touch Najib.

As if sensing the disappointment, Najib put his hand on the young man’s shoulder and led him across the Carnival threshold.

“This way, noble one, I need no coppers from you, for when night falls, we close our doors and send the public back to their homes. Except for you. You do not want to go home do you?”

“No, never.”

“Perhaps you are looking for a new home then?”

“Yes!”

“Well, then, you are in luck, we are pulling up stakes tonight, when our mistress returns. Perhaps we can help you find a new home.”

“I have.”

The two looked at each other a moment. “Then let me tell you a little about a few of our numbers. Then you can decide whether you truly ‘have’.” “All the Troupers have a stage name—something to make them stand out in the public’s mind.

“Let me start with something small...

## Act Two

We passed the school  
where children played,  
Their lessons scarcely  
done;

We passed the fields of  
gazing grain,  
We passed the setting  
sun.

---Emily Dickinson

Because I could not stop for Death, stanza 3

## The Living Doll

“See the figure sitting there on the stage. The two foot tall figure wearing the Victorian’s Gentleman’s clothing with the top hat. That is Knick Knack. He looks like a child playing dress up, does he not? Well as you get closer, you will notice the hard lines under his mouth and the red circles on his cheeks, and the brown wood grain of his skin, actually it isn’t really skin, it’s wood.

“Yes, my noble friend, he is made of wood. In fact, he is a ventriloquist’s dummy. A number of years ago, before this unworthy one came to sail these shores, Knick Knack was just a simple doll. But when he came to Carnival all that changed. He became alive. There is only one person here that truly knows anything of his existence before coming here to Carnival, but he will never say. So the troupers mostly speculate.

“His act starts out like a normal ventriloquist’s act. Another of the troupers will hold Knick Knack on their lap and they will *talk* to each other. Then the trouper will get up and put Knick Knack on the chair and leave. Then Knick Knack will continue talking, quite to the amazement of all. He especially likes children. Knick Knack spins elaborate, wonderful tales of his travels with his owner that entertain the children who come to visit him. The stories change with every crowd so, we’re not sure if there is any truth to any of them.”

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## The Living Doll

Knick Knack was a ventriloquist's dummy. He traveled throughout the Core as part of his owners act. His owner was cruel and selfish. But an act of treachery cost his owner his life. His owner betrayed a Half-Vistani, who took Knick Knack. Then the half-Vistani happened upon the Carnival. The moment the pair crossed the threshold, Knick Knack became alive. The half-Vistani joined the skurra as the Pistoleer, and Knick Knack became a Troupier. Knick Knack knows only the skills, abilities, and languages he learned while amongst the Troupiers. Knick Knack knows blind fighting, crowd working, information gathering, observation, throwing, ventriloquism, story telling, and speaks five languages: Balok, Darkonese, Falkovnian, Mordentish, and Orc. He is also proficient with the dart.

Knick Knack is a wood golem, and has all the abilities listed in Van Richten's Guide to the Created.

Knick Knack wears Victorian gentleman's clothes, made to fit of course. He wears a bandoleer concealed under his vest and coat, which holds 30 darts. Knick Knack has the mentality of a child, and is prone to temper tantrums when he doesn't get his way. Only two people have any control over him the Pistoleer, thinking of him like a father, and Isolde, whom he believes gave him life which in a way is true, through the twisting.

**Golem, Wood:** AL N; AC 6; MV 12; HD 12; THAC0 8; #AT 2 (splinters) or 4 (darts); Dmg 2d8/2d8; SA splinters; SD +2 or better weapon to hit; SZ S; ML 20.

"And now for something strange..."

## The Rock

"See there, that small statue of a dwarf standing by that pile of rocks. That is Gon Stonesplitter. He's not really made of stone,

although you couldn't tell except by close inspection. But if you try to get that close, you'll find out exactly how stone-like his fists feel on your face. He was found in a field when we arrived to grace a town in Nova Vaasa with our presence. He had been the victim of a wizard's attack. Some say he was actually turned to stone by a spell called *flesh to stone*, I've never heard of such a spell, but then I'm not a wizard. Others say he was just paralyzed.

Whatever it was, he was standing there like a statue. Our esteemed mistress, Isolde, walked right up to him and returned him to his natural state. He doesn't know how long he had been standing there, but he sure was glad we arrived. He had only planned on staying long enough to repay Mistress Isolde for helping him out. That was three years ago and as you can see, he's still here.

"His act is quite simple. He stands there motionless like a statue, for hours sometimes, until someone walks up to him, then he moves, proving he's not a statue. He can also break rocks with his bare hands, hence the pile of them. He'll even invite a strong gilly to use a sledgehammer, which usually sits near the pile of rocks, to *break* him. It never works. You see, he's strong as stone. Gilly? I'm sorry that's anyone not connected with the carnival, an outsider. Sometimes, he and the Brute, who's on the other side of the midway, get into a strength competition. That's usually a good show. It usually comes out in a draw."

## The Rock

Gon Stonesplitter, like most dwarves in the Demiplane of Dread, is from the city of Tempe Falls in Necropolis. He and his friends had happened encountered an evil wizard in Nova Vaasa who used the reverse of the 6th level wizard spell *stone to flesh*. When the carnival arrived, Isolde dispelled the spell, returning him to flesh.

The twisting caused by Isolde, took hold of him immediately. His skin can become as

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hard as stone, as per the 4th level wizard spell *Stoneskin*. He merely needs to think, and the next round the effect takes effect. As with the spell, he becomes immune to any attack by cut, blow, projectile, or the like. When in his stone form, he also has added strength, as per the 2nd level wizard spell *Strength*. He can also blend in with any stone surface. He has a 90% chance of going undetected, provided he remains perfectly still.

He is an expert stone mason and create great works of art in stone, which he sells to the public. Gon is proficient in the tight group Axes: hammers, with the maul being his chosen weapon, which he is also an expert and specialized in.

**Gon Stonesplitter, dwarf male, 7th-level fighter:** AC 10; MV 9; hp 79; THAC0 14/11; # AT 2; Dmg by weapon (2d4+3, 1d10+3 with strength and specialization bonuses); SA strength (2nd level wizard spell); SD camouflage and stoneskin (4th-level wizard spell); SZ S; ML elite (14); Str 17; Dex 11; Con 18; Int 12; Wis 15; Cha 9; AL LN.

“I see you’ve noticed the beautiful woman dancing there and the handsome man with the wheellock belt pistols on his hips, playing the lute, both with painted faces like the harlequins. They are the Crimson Rose and the Pistoleer. They are our skurra. They are Vistani. I know very little about the skurra. But then, all us humble troupers know little about them. That is another’s department.”

The sun began to dip below the tree line. Najib bowed low as a woman approached. The young man with the newly-lit eyes turned to see an attractive dark-haired woman stride past them, oblivious to all but her own thoughts. She smiled when she saw Najib bow to her, then continued past him. The woman wore dark blue trousers and high black boots. Her hair flowing behind her. She walked over to the Pistoleer playing the lute. He stopped playing and left the stage he and the Crimson Rose danced on. The Crimson Rose also left the stage. All the skurra began hustling about.

“Now, if you’ll look over there to the violet vardo. That is Madame Fortuna’s vardo. She is Vistani. If you are to travel with us, then that is the place to go. You’ll notice the skurra are beginning to pack up. It’s called a Tear Down. We’re moving on now.”

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# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## Act Three

We paused before a house  
that seemed  
A swelling of the ground;  
The roof was scarcely  
visible,  
The cornice but a mound.

---Emily Dickinson

Because I could not stop for Death, stanza 4

## The Pistoleer

“Greetings, *giorgio*. Sit here, before me. Najib brought you here because you needed somewhere to stay. The Carnival is departing your former home. And because you had some questions only I could answer. About the Pistoleer. Very well, I will tell you his tale while we travel to our next location.

“The Troupers gave him his name, the Pistoleer, for the wheellock belt pistols he carries so visibly. It is the only name he will answer to. He is also *giomorgo*, half-Vistani. But then, only a Vistana can see that.

“He came to us about three years ago, with the one called Knick Knack. Things have not changed much since he crossed the threshold of the Carnival. He had no voice then, and he has no voice now. If you get close enough, you will notice his face paint extends down covering his neck, unlike the other skurra. For on his neck is a scar, painted with the skurra-vera. It covers the real scar he has across his neck. Someone tried to take his life, unsuccessfully. No one truly knows how he got it. For he did not, and can not tell us how it happened. But one of the tales that wooden man, Knick Knack tells, is that his former owner gave it to him.

“From the moment he came to us, he was not very social. The only people he associates with, with any regularity, is the Organ Grinder, whom the Troupers believe is his uncle or father. But that is more speculation on their part. He also associates with the Crimson Rose,

whom he plays the lute for and even dances with sometimes. And Isolde.

“Most of the time, you will see him sitting in a quiet corner of the Carnival, feeding the little creatures the Troupers call Creeplings. He is good with the animals, like the Organ Grinder. And prefers their company to that of the people.

“The Troupers do a great deal of speculating about him. Him and our mistress Isolde. He is the only one who has seen the inside of her vardo. The Troupers like to believe they’re having a romance. He certainly did bring her out of her shell. She associates much more with the Troupers than she use to. And she spends a great deal of time with him. They even walk about the Carnival together. And he always seems to know where she is. But if there is a romance between them, it is no ones business but theirs.

“He has also tried several times to create a brew that could cure our Hideous Man-Beast of his lycanthropy. But something has happened each time which has prevented him from finishing the brew.

“Well, as you can feel. The vardo has stopped. We have arrived at our destination, and I’m sure Najib will return for you presently.”

## The Pistoleer

The Pistoleer is an attractive half-Vistani man who once belonged to the Equaar tribe. Like most half-Vistani, he grew up shunned by the Vistani for his *tainted* blood. The animals had nothing against his parentage. He enjoys a rapport with the animals traveling with the Carnival similar to that of the Organ Grinder.

Like the Organ Grinder, no animal natural or twisted will ever harm him. He seems to care more for the Creeplings. He treats them like his children. Similar to the Organ Grinder, the Pistoleer can summon a swarm of Creeplings to him, by shaking a box of food, like nuts or

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popcorn. The sound will draw 1d6 Creeplings to his side over the course of three rounds. If the situation calls for it, he can direct the Creeplings into action, with simple commands. He has also developed a certain rapport with the Hideous Man-Beast, who will not attack in beast form.

The Pistoleer is never without his wheellock belt pistols. They are his weapons of choice, he is a specialized in them. He is ambidextrous, and has two-weapon specialization. He also has quick draw or fast draw. He is proficient with the lute. He is also fluent in the secret music and language of the skurra. He has gunsmith and weather sense as per the Pistoleer kit. For a complete description of the Pistoleer character kit, consult *Champions of the Mists*. He also has animal training, lore and handling.

**The Pistoleer, human male, 11th-level ranger (Pistoleer):** AC6 (with Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 73; THAC0 8 (6 with wheellock belt pistols); #AT 2 (with any weapons) or 2/1 (with wheellock belt pistols, 2 the first round, one from each of the two he carries, and one each round after); Dmg 1d8 (wheellock belt pistol); SZ M; ML 19; Str 13; Dex 18; Con 15; Int 15; Wis 15, Cha 9; AL CG.

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## Act Four

Since then 't is  
centuries; but each  
Feels shorter than the  
day  
I first surmised the  
horses' heads  
Were toward eternity.

---Emily Dickinson

Because I could not stop for Death, stanza 5

As the young man with the newly lit eyes stood, the door to Madame Fortuna's vardo opened and Najib stood there.

"Hello again my noble friend. Did you learn what you wanted of Madame Fortuna?

"I suspect there is one more you wish to know of. Isn't there? You wish to know of me. As I said when you first came to us, I'm from a land far from here. I grew up on a great corsair ship sailing the Great Sea in northern Zakhara. That's the land I come from. My father was a mate on the ship. I never knew my elven mother. I worked my way up from cabin boy. I learned all the positions on the ship, except for captain and first mate. What brought me to these lands was a dishonorable act by my captain. After traveling through these lands for a while, I happened upon the Carnival.

"Perhaps I will tell you my whole story, but not today. My act? Most of the time, I'm a barker. I tell the tales of the Troupers. But I'm also a Funambulist, a tightrope walker. I use the Guys, the heavy ropes that help to support poles or high wire rigging.

"I'm new among the Troupers, a First of May, someone new to the carnival. I've only been here a little under a year. Ones like Knick Knack and Gon are Kinkers, experienced performers.

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“Now, my noble friend, have you truly found a new home?” Najib smiled at the young man.

The man with newly lit eyes returned Najib’s smile. “Yes.”

## Najib al-Auni bin Mutamin

Najib al-Auni bin Mutamin is a Corsair and grew up on one of the great corsair ships sailing the Great Sea in northern Zakhara. Najib enjoyed his life and loved the sea. The ship was his home, the crew his family and friends. This was the only life Najib knew.

He had many great adventures, all of which he enjoys telling to his new family. For more information on the Corsair character kit, consult *Al-Qadim Arabian Adventures* book.

One day, when Najib was 20, his captain and an Outworlder captain, began a bloody feud which lasted for two-years, ending in his ship ambushing his rival in the darkest early morning hours and attempting to brutally slaughter the rival and his crew. The act was without honor. Najib and several of the crew expressed their dislike of the dishonorable act, which fell on deaf ears. In the battle, which lasted until well after dawn, the crews were evenly matched, and somehow continued fighting. The crews were falling more from fatigue rather than sword blows. Most of the fighting centered aboard his ship. The day was clear and cloudless and the sun rose high in the sky, as the battle raged. Then a great thick fog rose from the sea. Both captains never even realized something was wrong. It was the two crews who noticed. Both ships, steered by Najib and the other captain’s first mate, tried to avoid the fog-bank, as the two captains fought, oblivious to everything except their fight.

However, every attempt to avoid the fog was for naught. It seemed to move with them, overtaking them and plunging the two ships in a thick stifling veil of white. Then it grew dark. When the captains were plunged into darkness, their swords fell to the deck. His ship emerged from the fog, minutes later, into the dark night of

Ravenloft's Sea of Sorrows. There was no sign of the other ship. There, as if waiting for them, was Captain Pieter van Riese and the Relentless. Nine crewmembers from both ship, were sent off in a dingy by the two captains. The two captains, his ship and crew from both ships are gone from the fight with Riese and the Relentless. Whether lured to the Relentless as 'new' crew, killed or maybe still out there sailing, none of them know.

The dingy ended up landing in Lamordia. The group began to travel the core, learning the languages and trying to find a way home. As they traveled the core, being turned away, if not outright driven out, by most of the ignorant, narrow-minded, xenophobic inhabitants, their numbers dwindled from the horrors the land holds.

Like all the people of the Corsair Domains, he is independent, strong-willed, and self-reliant. He cherishes his personal freedom, and is proud and adventurous. He is also very friendly and sincere, and enjoys to tell tales of his adventures on the Great Sea. He has a million of them. He considers himself an honorable man and would fight anyone who questions it. (Life without honor is meaningless. --Zakharan proverb) He is very reliable. Most everyone in the Carnival likes him.

He is a 6’ tall half-elven man in his mid-20s with dark tanned skin. He is lean and muscular, being in excellent shape from his years on the Great Sea. He keeps his straight black hair short and has a well-groomed goatee and mustache. Like all corsairs, he favors practical working clothes: a lightweight shirt with billowing sleeves, pantaloons, and supple black boots. Instead of a belt he wears colorful sashes and headscarves and many earrings.

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He is armed with a jambiya and a cutlass, which appears to be worn through the sash. Although he is proficient in the wheellock belt pistol, which he learned from the Pistoleer, he rarely wears them or rather no one 'sees' him wear them. He is also considered to be a Wisp, a trouper who can still pass undetected in mundane society. This, and his friendly personality is why he is one of the Carnival barkers.

Najib has no real act. Since he is a wisp, he acts mostly as barker. But occasionally he does a bit of an acrobatic show and tightrope walker. From his years aboard a ship, he can walk a tightrope and tumble. He is also good with a rope and does tailoring. Najib is a very charming man, and his exotic appearance only helps.

Since arriving in the Carnival he has become even more charming. So much so that he can charm any person as if casting *charm person*, the 1st level wizard spell. The verbal and somatic components for him to *charm* someone is: he must address them (Sir or Madame will do) and smile.

**Najib al-Auni bin Mutamin, half-elven male, F4 (corsair):** AC 6 (Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 27; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; SD charm person; SZ M; ML champion (15); Str 16; Dex 18; Con 13; Int 16; Wis 15; Cha 12; AL CN



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## CYPRIANUS

### AN EXPATRIATED MINSTREL WITH NO REGRETS

By: John K Spanberg  
(The Stoic)

"One thing more, one small doubt, there are treacherous people about. No offence, please reflect, your intentions may not be...correct?"

The Thenardiérs, from Les Misérablés.

A minstrel from Hazlan ?  
Is he able to tell a true  
tale ?

People love a good story, plain and simple. There are lots of stories, catering to every mood of human nature, suitable for any kind of occasion. A story by a campfire, a bedtime story, a sermon...the list goes on and on. Some stories are true, depicting actual events that took place. Some stories are not all true, but not complete fantasy, either. Some stories are fiction, pure figments of imagination.

The story of Cyprianus is a true story based on lies. Wandering the core like any other traveller, he looks like one of the countless of minstrels that seek fortune and fame. The difference between Cyprianus and them is that he is fleeing from his fame, or infamy, more correctly.

#### Cyprianus

##### Male human Bard 9

CR 8, SZ M 6 ft. 0. in., HD 9d6 HP 34, Init +3, Spd 30, AC 13 (Dex), Atk +7/+2, (+8/+3 w/masterwork falchion), Damage (falchion) 2d4, Crit.18-20; SA None SQ Bardic knowledge, Bardic Music, Silver Tongue (Sp), Compulsively Honest (Ex), AL NE, SV Fort +3,

Ref +9, Will +7, Str 12, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 16.

*Skills and Feats:* Diplomacy +12, Bluff +12, Disguise +10, Gather Information +10, Intuit Direction +8, Hide +10, Knowledge (Hazlan) +7, Perform (rhetoric, ode, drama, epic, storytelling, song, lyre, juggling, harp) +12, Spellcraft +9, Sense Motive +9; Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Skill Focus (Bluff), Skill Focus (Sense Motive), Melee Weapon Proficiency (Falchion).

*Languages:* Vaasi, Balok, Mordentish

*Equipment:* Masterwork falchion, backpack with miscellaneous equipment

#### Combat

Should anyone engage Cyprianus in physical combat, rather than mind games, he will likely be outraged. If in a city, he will try to attract attention to himself so that the guards might stop the fight. If in the open, he will try to fight as long as he can, running away if the odds are against him. He is quite fond of his enchantment spells, so he might try to subdue or bewilder attackers, or he may have charmed NPCs or monsters, so that they might attack for him. He fights with a falchion that was given to him by the governor as a sign of good faith.

Special qualities:

**Silver tongue (sp):** If not flat-footed, once per day as a standard action, Cyprianus may stop his attack and try to reason with his attackers. They must succeed in a will save (DC 20) or stop. Cyprianus must speak in a language known by his attackers. If he succeeds, he may give them a reason why they shouldn't attack him. An opposed Sense Motive check may be called for when reasoning with Cyprianus when he is using the silver tongue ability. The effects of the zone

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of truth are temporarily ineffective when this happens.

**Compulsively honest (Ex):** Cyprianus should be treated as if in a permanent zone of truth. This affects only Cyprianus, and other castings of the spell will fail. He may try to embellish the truth when he speaks.

**Spells:** Dancing lights, detect magic, mending, open/close, prestidigitation, read magic; alarm, charm person, identify, ventriloquism; cure moderate wounds, enthrall, invisibility, Tasha's hideous laughter; charm monster, confusion, emotion.

## Appearance

Cyprianus' rich bronze skin and stocky frame betray his Rashemani heritage. His face is normally set in a scowl or sneer, as if he believes he is destined for something better. He usually hides this under a pleasant, sometimes oily, demeanor. His hair is greying, but his eyes are still vibrant, just as the rest of his face. He has a big forehead, which often has a frown. His jaw is slightly undershot, which has made some of his biased countrymen to believe him to be stupid. He wears whatever he feels is necessary to pose as someone else, but he prefers loose clothes.

## Background

Cyprianus, now a travelling minstrel of sorts, was once an advisor of a minor governor in the domain of Hazlan. His looks made him look inferior to the young governor, which was a boon for the governor. Cyprianus was good at his job, and he was very popular among the other workers. Though successful in every way, he wanted to achieve something greater than being a mere advisor, which he thought was just a clerk and a herald put together. He didn't know what he wanted, but he certainly did not want the governor's position. All that responsibility, and so little time. The power was interesting, though.

Walking through the mansion, Cyprianus felt that having so many people around him, the governor was dependent on other people. Too dependent. The governor simply didn't have the time to decide everything for himself. Even if he did, he wouldn't have enough experience to deal with them on his own. He concluded that the governor was inept. Cyprianus smiled. He was on to a plan. A plan that was very simple, but all the more fun. He would show that his governor could not be without him, but also use this confidence to his own ends. Nobody would suspect him, with his spotless reputation. Were he to be caught, he would explain that he only did what was best for the people of Hazlan.

Cyprianus started off carefully. His influence only saw that a few minor adjustments to the original decisions were made. This made him and especially the governor more popular, as Cyprianus' adjustments saw that the conditions of the people improved. A few people were given less fines, and certain things ran...more smoothly than before. Nobody seemed to notice, but the people near Cyprianus were actually the ones who benefited the most. Cyprianus was happy, but this wasn't enough. His charade had got the better of him. He wanted to see how far he could go.

This was where he made his first mistake. He walked into the wilderness,



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searching for a hermit he had heard tales of. He found a limestone cave not far from his home. This proved to be the hermit's cave. Cyprianus asked the hermit if he could make him a better liar. The hermit hesitated, explaining that it was not without consequence. Cyprianus quickly persuaded him. The hermit created a mixture of honey, specks of silver, snake venom and oils of various kinds. Cyprianus was told to drink the concoction, which he did. He shuddered, and his vision blurred for a moment. He tried to speak, but couldn't. It was as if his mouth were sealed shut. A moment after, he could speak again. The hermit smiled, and told him to step closer to a flame upon a shrine in a corner of the cave. The hermit explained that the flame would shy away from Cyprianus if the concoction was effective, as it would only stay close to an honest man. Cyprianus walked slowly, but firmly to the flame. The flame shied away from him. He tried to move even closer, but then the flame started flickering. He tried to touch the flame, but it died out. He paid the hermit well for his services, and went back to his hometown.

Now, things changed even more in the mansion. Cyprianus' first adjustments were simply slightly altered from the truth. Now they were blatant lies. His own coffers, which had only slightly grown because of his early escapades, now grew rapidly. He was very careful about his own cash flow, and continued to live quite modestly. His family didn't know anything, as he didn't tell them, and because Cyprianus was the head of the house, nothing was revealed to them.

The central authorities took notice of what was taking place, ignoring Cyprianus and branding the governor as the guilty party. The governor was "replaced" by another, and things were expected to clear up. This was not the case. The new governor, older and more experienced than the former, grew suspicious. He was not at all pleased with being directed to the outskirts of Hazlan because of corrupt backwater officials. The fact that there was still money disappearing from the system angered him even more. He stopped listening to Cyprianus, his advisor. When he did so, the financial problems seemed

to improve. The desperate Cyprianus went to the hermit once more the next evening. The hermit was even more reluctant this time, but Cyprianus knew how to persuade him. After drinking the concoction once more, he walked up to the flame. Nothing happened this time. Cyprianus, normally a composed man, lashed out at the hermit. He was furious, and made the hermit drink his own mixture. The hermit fell twitching onto the floor of the cavern, and Cyprianus went home.

The next day, Cyprianus tried to gain the favour of the governor again, but no matter what he said, he failed. If anything, Cyprianus only made things worse, because the governor became suspicious towards him. All the lies he once had told became obvious, one by one.

Things slowly grew very grim for Cyprianus, who knew he had to flee in order to save his life. Leaving his wife and children with no explanation and no concern, he dashed off in the night. What happened to his family was never known.

## Current sketch

Cyprianus hasn't set his foot in Hazlan after the night he left. He isn't paranoid, but figures that it's better to be safe than sorry. He travels the core, trying to disguise himself in different ways in order to escape the wrath of his native authorities.

He has several characters that he assumes. Some are real; most of these have been dealt with by Cyprianus. Others are pure figments of the imagination. No matter what his disguise, he seems to avoid the color red. All is well as long as he uses his disguise without talking. He can't fake voices, and he can't tell a lie to save his life, literally speaking. Should someone notice something peculiar about him, he would ruin his own disguise in a matter of a few well-phrased questions. His compulsive honesty is not a hindrance for embellishing the truth. Some say liars and criminals can't sing in tune, because the voice is always a sign of truth. They are absolutely right in Cyprianus' case. He

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can't sing in tune, so he will always have problems finding an appreciative audience.

## Adventure hooks:

- ◆ When travelling in Hazlan, the PCs suddenly meet Cyprianus' family. They are now destitute and scorned. They may ask the PCs to help them, or to find Cyprianus. They may want him dead, or they may simply be curious.
- ◆ The governor has sent guards to claim Cyprianus. The PCs can either help or hinder them.
- ◆ The hermit in the cave didn't die after all. He is searching for Cyprianus, wanting to avenge himself. The various concoctions have made him rather different than he used to be...
- ◆ Cyprianus seeks the PCs for help. He is being followed because he has killed the person he is posing as, or one of his old enemies are coming for him. For a less violent approach, he may pose as a poor (in more than one sense of the word) minstrel, or he might look for a job. No matter what, he may seem earnest at first, but suspicious PCs may smell something underneath.
- ◆ If the DM decides that this has happened a long time ago, people may have forgotten about Cyprianus, at least his name. The PCs may notice this after they've met him, and try to bring him home.



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## MICHEL LE PERDU

### THERE IS OFTEN BUT ONE KIND OF HATRED: MAN'S HATE FOR HIMSELF.

By: John Kristian Spanberg  
(the Stoic)

#### Youth's inexperience turned to injustice

Youth is a mixture of childhood innocence and adult maturity. It is a period of confusion. Most people know this to be a normal state of mind, but some youths are not aware of it. Adding more confusion to it can have disastrous results. Michel LePerdu is a prime example of this.

#### Michel LePerdu

##### Male human Rogue 6

CR 6, SZ M 5 ft. 8. in., HD 6d6+6 HP 26, Init +7, Spd 30, AC 13 (Dex.), Atk +5 w/Kukri (1d4, Crit 18-20, x2), +6 w/Spiked Chain (2d4, Crit. 20,x2), SA Sneak Attack +3d6; SQ Evasion (Ex), Uncanny Dodge (Ex), Shattered Mind (Ex) AL CN, SV Fort +2, Ref +8, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 9, Cha 10

*Skills and Feats:* Appraise +3, Bluff +8, Climb +8, Craft (trapmaking) +4, Disguise +8, Intimidate +10, Hide +7, Listen +8, Move Silently +12, Profession (farmer) +2, Search +10, Spot +9, Wilderness Lore +1 ; Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain), Exotic Weapon proficiency (kukri), Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (spiked chain).

*Languages:* Falkovnian, Darkonese.

*Equipment:* Spiked chain, kukri.

**Shattered Mind (Ex):** Due to Michel's experience that fateful night, his mind is still suffering from the trauma. In combat situations, this is reflected in the way he fights. If in his usual, aggressive mode, Michel will have the rage ability of a barbarian half his level. Thus,

he rages as a 3rd-level barbarian. If he fights while in a calmer, more repressed state, he will act as if under a confusion spell.

#### Combat

Michel is not a typical rogue. He is just as likely to rush head on in a fight as to plan an ambush. When fighting head on, he will attack using his spiked chain, trying to make short work of his opponents as quickly as possible. He won't stop at anything to achieve this. When performing an ambush, he will normally use his kukri, changing to his spiked chain after trying to sneak attack the most intimidating of his opponents. He has trained himself not to make noise with the spiked chain, but can't backstab using this weapon. He uses typical ambush tactics. An ambush is very likely to give him a flashback, particularly in a forest, so he will seek to avoid this.

#### Appearance

Michel will usually come across as a crazed man in his twenties. His hair is the color of a straw in late autumn. His eyes dart nervously from side to side; he's skittish and spasmodic and moves around with small gavotte-like steps. When he's calmer, he seems to be in a world of his own, with staring, glassy eyes. He is very reluctant to move while in this state. He sometimes utters a few words in a murmur. He usually wears very plain, slightly tattered and dirty clothes.

#### Background

André LePerdu was a man who lived with his wife and two sons in eastern Falkovnia. He was an ordinary soldier in Vlad Drakov's army. He wasn't anyone out of the ordinary, but had a good heart and a sound mind. He was largely unaware of the ways of Drakov, as he

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lived on the countryside. All he ever heard were terrible rumors, but he refused to believe them.

He brought his two sons up as well-mannered, well-behaved boys. He cherished his family, as any other upstanding man would do. Sadly, he had to leave his house from time to time, as he was a soldier, after all. He was stationed not far from home, so he had few problems getting home. Sometimes, he had to journey a bit further. His two sons, seeing their father ever more rarely, admired their father very much. They wanted to become soldiers one day, as well. The oldest of his sons, Michel, made mock swords of wood for himself and his brother Jean.

One day, while the boys were playing, they saw their father come home. He looked very serious. His sons rushed towards him, and he cheered up for a while, but his sad expression came back. He went inside their cabin to talk to their mother. She became very serious, too. The boys asked what the reason was for this sudden change. Their mother took her two sons aside, and explained that their father was to take part in a campaign against Darkon, and he might not come back. The two adolescents were thrilled, but were also afraid they might not see their father again.

The next morning, André left his home, and wasn't heard from in a long while. Meanwhile, his sons grew up, becoming young men. They continued their sword-practice, but now they had real weapons. Their boisterousness had led them into bad company. Their idea of becoming soldiers and fighting for their country was warped. They became hoodlums, preying on soldiers running away from their duty on the front. They acquired weapons unknown in Falkovnia, as they didn't want the authorities to know that there were local ruffians who plundered soldiers. They even trained with some older, more experienced thieves who taught them some tricks of the trade. Robbing fleeing soldiers was not a very rewarding livelihood, as the soldiers were all just as poor as themselves, and the older thieves expected a hefty sum for their "tutoring". This became just another reason

to attacking people, as they couldn't pay their dues in time.

One cloudy night, a band of soldiers, battered and exhausted, came past the ruffians' lair. The watchman of the brigands, who on this night happened to be Michel, saw that there were only a few of them, and called for an attack. The gang leapt to the attack. A few army veterans would have easily defeated a few inexperienced youths, but because of their weariness, the hoodlums were victorious. This group of soldiers were carrying more valuables than the earlier ones. One of them was wearing an expensive-looking suit of armour. Michel decapitated the soldier with a quick slash, and held his head up as a grisly trophy. As the clouds revealed a full moon, the rays revealed the head inside the helmet.

To Michel's horror, he saw the head of his father. He dropped the head and ran, trying to figure things out. His young, frail mind eventually shattered.

## Current sketch

Michel is now desperately trying to find the murderer of his father, wandering across the northern Core in search of him. He travels by foot, sometimes using the main roads; he goes off the beaten path. It seems that his madness diminishes when he enters hamlets and more urban areas, but he grows more rabid in the wilds, particularly on nights when the moon is full.

Michel knows it is a man who killed his father, possibly the same age as himself. When Michel sees young men who bear resemblance to him, he normally enters his aggressive mode. Normally (about half the time), he is quite aggressive, but has also a very pronounced nervous edge to his aggression. He is quite snappy around other people, especially young men. He tries to avoid people as much as he can. There are two reasons for this. The first reason is simply that he sometimes realizes what he is really doing. The second reason is that he fears an ambush from the imaginary assassin that killed his father.

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In more lucid moments, he's trying to convince himself that nothing really happened. He mutters, shakes his head, cries tearfully or walks very carefully. When he goes to sleep in this mode, he will curl up in a foetal position. When muttering, he sometimes thinks aloud. His line of thought typically goes as follows: The years of yearning for his father had simply confused his young mind at that moment. And was the moon really up? It had been cloudy earlier. But how could he remember that? In fact, he wasn't even there. He was really on the front, letting a blind eye when his father went back home to his family... And then he goes mad again.

Michel is not evil, but he is a borderline case in this way as well. His aggression grows slowly more violent, as he is quite likely to attack young men about the same size and age as himself. For this reason, he doesn't stay too long in any of the more urban areas of the North Core.

## Adventure hooks:

- ◆ Michel meets the PCs, and thinks one of them is his father's murderer. He attacks, and then runs away. He'll try again later, in order to tire them out.
- ◆ A young noble has received threats from an unknown wanderer. He needs protection from the hoodlum, and contacts the PCs.
- ◆ Jean is looking for Michel, and wants the PCs to help find him. Jean may want to avenge his father, or he might just want his long lost brother to come home.
- ◆ Jean is just as deranged as Michel, and he is intent on killing either the PCs or Michel.
- ◆ The ghost of André LePerdu haunts the countryside near the place he was killed. He may or may not have been seen, but hardly anyone would have recognized him. He approaches the PCs, saying: "I regret that I have but one life to give for my country." This cryptic message is up to the PCs to decipher.



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## THE ODD COUPLE

### TWO LOVERS, ONE CURSE, MANY TORMENTS

By: Luiz Eduardo Neves Peret

A couple cursed to cause  
pain and suffering  
whenever they meet, yet  
they keep meeting.

#### Introduction

There is an old saying that love heals everything; no matter what trouble one's life is going through, love is the solution. But sometimes, love is just the beginning of trouble. This is the case of Thaddeus Deschamps and Stephanie Lumley, cursed to never find happiness while they are together.

#### Thaddeus Deschamps and Stephanie Lumley

Thaddeus Deschamps is the youngest son of a minor aristocratic family from Dementlieu. He is a muscular and attractive man in his late 20s, with deep black hair and eyes, but sometimes the weight of his condition lines his otherwise perfectly smooth face.

Thaddeus attended the best boarding schools and was accepted as member of the highest and most private social circles, preparing himself to one day become a doctor. During a vacation when he was 17, his father decided to inspect some of the family business in Invidia, taking him along.

In Karina, the young man was fascinated with the Harvest Festival. In a ball, he met Stephanie Lumley and everything changed in his life. She was a real beauty, a Mordentish golden blond girl with light blue eyes, barely 17 when they first met. She seemed just as impressed by the young man as he was with her, and their parents looked at their chat and dance with veiled enthusiasm, for it appeared that the two

were getting along very well and a serious relationship might sprout.

All this might have ended well, if not for Gabrielle Aderre's own interest in the young man. This happened before her mysterious affair that brought the Dukkar to the world, and she was still very fond of destroying relationships.

As usual, she tried to charm him to use and then dispose of him in a way that would make it obvious that he had cheated on his newly found beloved. However, sometimes love is, indeed, stronger than the darkest magic. Thaddeus was unimpressed by the lord's charms and resisted her evil eye more than once. He apparently was able to see through her illusions and enchantments, and felt that she had a "bad aura" around her. When she managed to meet him in private, he actively avoided her advances, saying that his heart had an owner. He went even further and told her that it was not proper for "a woman of her age" to make an advance on a man who could well be her son.

She was enraged, and as he turned his back on her, she spat the venomous words of a curse on him:

*May you two find in love no respite,  
May your passion carry only doom and pain,  
May your kiss be hurtful as a bite,  
May you bring down disasters in a chain,  
May you never find peace, only spite,  
Until the day your love burns under the rain.*

Being a man of enlightened background, Thaddeus dismissed the words as nonsense, even more the ending, which made no sense to him. He then returned to his beloved, but something felt wrong. As they hugged and kissed in a reserved table of the inn, a feeling of foreboding sank deep into his heart. As if to confirm his fears, the barmaid who was serving them let a bottle of wine slip through her fingers and shatter on the ground, blinding her with a volley of glass shards. Thaddeus tried to help, but she



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screamed for him to stay away, while others ran to take care of her.

Stephanie also felt an apprehension she could not explain. As they left the restaurant, a black cat coming from nowhere crossed their path and then ran between another guest's legs while he was going upstairs. The man lost his balance and fell heavily on the floor, breaking his neck. His eyes stared at her as life left his body. The other guests threw a suspicious look at the couple.

Stephanie's father came to take her away, while Thaddeus left to meet with his own father. The old man looked visibly upset, and he told Thaddeus that he had seen him with a strange woman earlier that day. He asked what his son had been doing, but when Thaddeus explained what had happened, his father's face turned pale and his eyes widened. He refused to talk about the issue and left Thaddeus even more confused and apprehensive than before.

The next day, the couple met to do some shopping. When they entered an antiquary, the store's owner personally came to talk to the young and obviously wealthy pair. Suddenly, a halberd attached to an old full plate's gauntlet slipped and its axe-like blade fell on the man's head. The other customers were shocked, and some recognized the couple from the scene of the previous accident. Thaddeus and Stephanie left the bloody place in a hurry, suspicious whispers echoing at their backs.

They eventually noticed that every place they visited together was the stage for an accident, usually with dire consequences. Thaddeus left Stephanie in a tea house, saying that he was worried about his father's health, and went back to the inn to find his father, who was packing to leave.

Thaddeus asked the reason to be leaving so soon, and told his father that he intended to propose marriage to Stephanie. His father looked at him in the eye and adamantly forbade him of doing so. They argued, and the air felt warmer in the room. When it became clear that his son would not accept his order, he finally yelled:

"You are not even a legitimate son! What right do you think you have, to bring disgrace upon a truly aristocratic girl?!"

Thaddeus was shocked. His father looked at him in the eye and, calming down a little, explained: "You are truly my son, but not my wife's son. Many years ago, during a time when... My wife and I were not... getting along well, I once met a charming gypsy woman from a wandering show. She was mysterious and beautiful, and seemed fond of elder men. We met a couple of times without the knowledge of her family. Then she left in a foggy night, as so many gypsies do. I never thought of that again, and tried to return to my normal life.

"However, one year later she returned, carrying a child in her hands. She said that the boy's fair skin denounced his impure blood and was giving her a lot of trouble with her family, so she wanted me to take care of the child. I did not accept it at first, but she warned me of the consequences of my acts. I feared a scandal and accepted the baby.

I managed to make it look like the baby had been found at our front door, and my wife – the woman you have been calling "mother" all these years – loved you from the first moment. I never had the nerve to tell her the truth, and never saw any reason why I should.

But your true mother gave me a final warning before leaving forever. She told me that your future carried the burden of a curse, and should you ever cross the path of a gypsy woman, your true love might be doomed forever, and everyone around you would suffer. I saw you with the gypsy woman, and now I know I must keep you away from this girl. It is for your own sake, for hers, and for everyone else's. This curse thing has started already! You must not see Stephanie again!"

Thaddeus was astonished. He took a while to fully grasp the meaning of his father's words. But when he came back to his senses, he looked angrily at his father and answered that it was all nonsense, that his father was a superstitious fool, and that he certainly did not

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believe anything about that curse thing. The argument grew hot again.

Thaddeus was almost leaving the room, when someone knocked the door. It was Stephanie, worried about what was happening. As soon as she crossed the door, Thaddeus' father put his hand on his own chest, feeling great pain. The emotional charge was too much for his old heart and he fell. Thaddeus ran to him, but there was nothing he could do. Between painful shakes and seizures, his father warned him one last time to stay away from the girl.

Stephanie was shocked when she heard the old man's final words, as they sounded like an accusation, and even more like a curse. She could not bear the sight of his beloved embracing his dying father, and the old man's dead eyes looking straight at her. That was too much for her, and she fled the inn. Thaddeus wanted to follow her, but other guests arrived to see what had happened and he could not leave.

All that changed both lives forever. Since that moment, Thaddeus has followed Stephanie everywhere she goes. She warned him more than once to keep distance, and her family decided to support her, thinking that he is an inconvenient foreign young man. They did not suspect anything about what truly happened. Stephanie only said that he had courted her and she refused. Tired of repelling his approaches at home and involving family members in the problem – and fearful that they will fall prey to the “jinx”, as she calls what she perceives to be some kind of supernatural bad luck revolving around them both – she decided to travel through the Core, using her resources to hire bodyguards and companions. She told her family she wants to study and know the world before settling for life.

Thaddeus, however, did not accept her initial refusals. He knows she also loves him and wants to meet her again. Stephanie seems to still love him indeed, for she leaves clues as to her next destination. In truth, she is trying to understand the nature of the bad luck, and somehow get rid of it. Thaddeus, however, is still too skeptical about the curse, and firmly

believes Stephanie is being influenced by her Mordentish childhood, with ghost stories and superstitions. Sometimes, though, even his rational mind will stop for a moment and wonder, as bad things happen whenever they have a chance encounter.

After the death of Thaddeus' father, he never had the chance to talk to Stephanie and fully explain what has happened, so she does not know of the curse bestowed upon him, nor of his mother's prophecy. Stephanie feels that she has had something to do with the death of Thaddeus' father, either by the effect of the “jinx” or at least because they were arguing about her when the old man suffered the attack. She regrets this, and does not want to face Thaddeus until she finds a final answer, which she pursues with all her heart (in game terms, she had failed an horror check the day before, when the first incidents happened, and with the shock of the death she witnessed while still recovering, she suffered an “obsession” effect).

## The “Jinx”

The curse Gabrielle Aderre bestowed upon Thaddeus was enforced by the Dark Powers and is somewhat similar to the “Doombringer” curse of Dr. Van Richten, but with a special twist: it only manifests when Thaddeus and Stephanie come close to each other. Unless they are within 300ft. of each other, *Detect Magic* and similar means of noticing and/or identifying magic will not detect anything unusual on either of them. Once they enter the perimeter of the curse, a *Detect Magic* or similar spell will detect an aura of Transmutation and Enchantment. The strength of the aura is “faint” at 300ft. and increases as they approach each other, becoming “moderate” at 100ft., “strong” at 50ft. and “overwhelming” at 30ft. or less.

When they come within 300ft. of each other, a chain of events, accidents and coincidences begins to manifest. One such event occurs every hour they stay at such distance, as for example when they both are in the same neighborhood. If they come within 100ft. of

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each other, the chain of events speeds up, one effect happening every ten minutes. As they approach to 50ft., one effect manifests itself every minute. If they come within 30ft., one effect happens every round. The effects also become more aggressive and deadly as they come closer.

The first effect is always a reminder of the curse's first verse: "no respite". Both Thaddeus and Stephanie feel a sense of foreboding and dark anticipation. This feeling has alerted Stephanie of Thaddeus' proximity all times and she immediately left.

Also, when they come within 300ft. of each other, creatures within 30ft. of either one may make a Spot check (DC30) to notice an invisible lingering aura on both of them. This aura can be felt as a strange anticipation or a sense of anxiety. As the cursed couple enters the inner areas of effect, the DC drops by 5 for each new range (the DC is shown on the top of each of the tables below). As the creature succeeds the check, it becomes clear that either Thaddeus or Stephanie, or both, are somehow related to the sudden incidents. The OR of the couple rapidly increases, and in more superstitious areas this may be deadly. Thaddeus has already experienced a few skirmishes with mob justice in small towns.

After either of them has entered the outmost perimeter of the curse's area of effect, the DM is encouraged to create minor effects and accidents in order to introduce a sense of uneasiness. As an alternative, the DM may roll 1d20 on the tables below:

## **From 300ft. to 100ft.**

**(Minor Effects, once/hour, Spot check DC30):**

Roll	Effect
01-03	Mirrors break within 30ft. of either Thaddeus or Stephanie, black cats within 50ft. are attracted to either one, or other commonly known signs of bad luck might happen (DM's choice).
04-06	The temperature in a 30ft. radius of either one drops by 1 to 5 degrees

	Celsius.
07-10	A pack of rats seems to follow either one from a distance of 50ft., for a full minute. The rats are not controlled, do not attack unless attacked first and can defend themselves normally.
11-13	Normal, small light sources (candles, lanterns, torches) within 30 ft. of either one turn red or blue for a full minute, then go out. They can be lighted again normally.
14-16	One randomly chosen creature (or DM's choice) within 30ft. of either one receives a -2 luck penalty to Fear, Horror and Madness saves, until the creature leaves the area. If the creature returns, the penalty applies again.
17-18	Normal animals within 30ft of either one must make a Will save (DC20) or be panicked for 10 rounds. Any Handle Animal checks with these animals (DC20) suffer a -4 luck penalty.
19	One randomly chosen creature (or DM's choice) within 30ft of either one must make a Will save (DC20) or suffer -1 to all attack, save and skill check rolls until they leave the area. If they enter the area again, a new save is needed.
20	Choose an effect and re-roll on the "Moderate Effects" table

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## From 100ft. to 50ft.

(Moderate Effects, once/10 minutes, Spot check DC25)

Roll	Effect
01-03	A silent ghostly image lingers within 50ft. of each one for a full minute. It is similar to a Silent Image spell and resembles someone who died recently in the area. It does not interact with the environment.
04-06	Normal texts become blurry, letters change places and forms and the text becomes impossible to read, unless <i>comprehend languages</i> or some other spell is used. The effect lasts for a minute.
07-10	Ghostly sounds echo within 50ft. of each one for a full minute. Anyone hearing these sounds must make a Fear save (DC20).
11-13	Food and water become spoiled within 30ft. of either one.
14-16	One randomly chosen creature (or DM's choice) within 30ft. of either one must rolls a Will save (DC20) or suffer a -2 luck penalty to all attack, weapon damage, save and skill check rolls until that creature leaves the area. If the creature comes within 30ft. of either one, a new save is needed.
17-18	Normal, small light sources (candles, lanterns, torches) within 50 ft. of either one turn red or blue for a full minute, then explode and turn off. The explosion causes 1d6 points of fire damage to all within 30ft., <b>except the couple</b> (Reflex save DC 20 for half damage).
19	One randomly chosen creature (or DM's choice) within 30ft. of either one must rolls a Fortitude save (DC20) or suffer a -4 luck penalty to both Str.- and Dex.-based rolls (including attack, damage and skill checks) until that creature leaves the area. If the creature comes within 30ft. of either one, a new save is needed.
20	Choose an effect and re-roll on the "Major Effects" table

## From 50ft. to 30ft.

(Major Effects, once/minute, Spot check DC 20)

Roll	Effect
01-03	Food and water sources within 50ft. of either one become poisonous (as per Poison spell, save DC20)
04-06	Normal animals within 30ft of either one must make a Will save (DC20) or be furious for 2d4 rounds (as per barbaric rage). <b>They will not attack either one of the couple.</b>
07-10	One randomly chosen creature (or DM's choice) within 30ft. of either one must rolls a Will save (DC20) or suffer the effects of a Slow spell for a full minute.
11-13	Normal texts become blurry, letters change places and forms and the text becomes impossible to read, unless a <i>Comprehend Languages</i> is used. This effect is permanent. Alternatively, one magical text suffers the same effect instead, for a full minute and then it reverts to normal.
14-16	A swarm of rats and vermin suddenly appears and follows either one, from a distance of 50ft., for a full minute. They actively attack anyone on their way ( <b>except the couple</b> ), as per the <i>Summon Swarm</i> spell.
17-18	The temperate in a 50ft. radius of either one greatly decreases. Anyone not protected from cold must make a Fortitude save (DC20) or suffer 1d6 points of subdual damage per round and become fatigued. <b>This does not affect the couple (they do not even feel the cold).</b>
19	A normal light source within 50ft. of either one suddenly explodes as a Fireball spell, causing 5d6 points of fire damage (Reflex save DC20 for half damage). <b>The fire does not affect either one of the couple.</b>
20	Choose an effect and re-roll on the "Critical Effects" table

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## Within 30ft.

(Critical Effects, once/round, Spot check DC15):

Roll	Effect
01-03	All living creatures with up to 4HD, within 20ft. of the couple, must make a Fortitude save (DC20) or suffer 1d4 points of temporary Constitution damage. They are aware that the sudden loss of health is somehow related to the couple.
04-06	Metallic objects at a random direction within 50ft. of the couple suddenly rust as if under the effect of a <i>Rusting Grasp</i> spell (cast at 8 <sup>th</sup> level), except that it affects all metallic objects or creatures in a 10ft.-radius area, and magic items, armor and weapons are allowed a Will save (DC 20) to negate the effect. This effect is instantaneous and <b>does not affect any metallic item worn or carried by the couple.</b>
07-10	One randomly chosen magic text (usually a scroll, rune, symbol, glyph or spellbook) within 50ft. of the couple activates itself, unleashing the appropriate spell effect, normally causing damage or some other detrimental effect. <b>Whatever the spell, it does not affect the couple.</b>
11-13	A swarm of vermin sprouts from a food source within 30ft. of each one, randomly acting as a <i>Summon Swarm</i> spell, for a full minute. <b>They do not attack the couple.</b>
14-16	A pack of lesser undead (skeletons, zombies, ghouls) is summoned to a randomly chosen place within 50ft. of the couple, immediately attacking anyone they meet. <b>They will not attack the couple, even to defend themselves.</b>
17-18	The temperature of a 20-ft. radius area, within 50ft. of the couple, suddenly decreases, and hailstones pound down, as per the <i>Ice Storm</i> spell, causing 5d6 points of damage (3d6 impact and 2d6 cold). Different from the spell, this effect allows a

	Reflex save (DC20) for half damage. The ice covering the floor is slippery (Reflex save DC20 to avoid falling, as per <i>Grease</i> spell) and takes 1d4+1 rounds to melt down, 1d2 rounds if under sunlight. <b>The storm and the slippery ice do not affect the couple.</b>
19	A normal light source within 50ft. of either one suddenly explodes as a Fireball, causing 10d6 points of fire damage (Reflex save DC20 for half damage). <b>The fire does not affect either one of the couple.</b>
20	One randomly chosen creature (or DM's choice) within 30ft. of either one must make a Fortitude save (DC20) or suffer an immediate, painful death. If successful, the creature suffers 3d6 points of damage instead. The creature knows that the couple's presence is responsible.

## Lifting the "Jinx"

The way to remove the curse is left to the DM. There are several possible interpretations of what "Until the day your love burns under the rain" might mean. Learning of the curse itself would be an adventure in itself.

Thaddeus is the only one who heard Gabrielle say the verses, and Stephanie knows nothing of them. He, on the other hand, considers himself a rational man and does not accept that his fate is linked to a curse, while she believes she alone is the cause of this supernatural bad luck, and by blaming herself for the death of Thaddeus' father, she keeps moving away from him (perhaps this is part of the curse, keeping both in constant motion and bringing doom to many others on their way).

Both are driven to their actions by their blind love (and perhaps a bit of obsession), she looking for a way out, he chasing the object of his affection. They are spending fortunes in this game, but their families seem to ignore it and keep sending them money (it is possible that this is also a secondary aspect of the curse, as they

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both indirectly bring a slow fall into misery to their families).





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## THE PIED PIPER A HORROR WITH A TUNE OF HIS OWN

By: David Cicalese  
(Jasper o' the Nine Lives)

"In the year 1284 after  
the birth of Christ  
From Hamelin were led  
away  
One hundred thirty  
children, born at this  
place  
Led away by a piper into  
a mountain."

**Excerpt from Nocturne....**

A portrait of the  
sinister Pied Piper, from  
the Nocturne short novel  
(Tales of Ravenloft).

Her rat form ran lightly over the scummy top of the bog; then she bit the outstretched arm of the piper until the instrument fell from his hand. She picked it up in her teeth and scurried back to the dry land surrounding the bog. The piper screamed, but even that much exertion caused him to sink lower. He watched as the murky wetness climbed to his chest. Then he turned, expecting to see the rat, but looking at the beautiful woman again. "I know a magical air myself," she said mirthfully, "though I am certain I lack your skill. Care to hear it?" She expected no answer and received none. She began to play, fingering the pipe as if she were a little girl with a new toy. There was no logic to the progression of the notes, no recognizable melody. Yet the notes provided the desired effect: the rats assembled at her feet. The piper's eyes grew wide in terror, and his muscles

contracted, causing him to sink to his shoulders in the clammy bog...

...What he found was a sight that sickened him every bit as much as the occurrence the night before. There in the bog, the pipe pointed straight up out of the murky liquid. One of the guards reached over and attempted to pull it out, but it seemed stuck. The guard positioned himself better and pulled again with all his strength...

Yet on that day the one who called himself the Pied Piper of Hamelin did not die. His cycle of terror begun anew as his has been for the centuries past.

His tale begins back in the year 1202 A.D in the lands of Gual. Born Marko Romoro amidst a tribe of traveling entertainers and musicians renowned among the courts of nobility his life was one of rare comfort among his people. Together with his father and mother young Marko gained great skill in the pipes, producing vibrant tunes and soul filled melodies. It was this skill that brought his family on the eve of his eighteenth year to the court of King Philip. The times themselves were troubled then and those who proclaimed themselves as nomads were viewed as thieves and heretics. Because of this the local shop keeps accused Marko's father of the theft of several prize horses and threw the family into the overcrowded dungeons. The King however needed soldiers more than prisoners and offered Marko a choice, stay in the dungeons forever and rot away or join his army as they marched on Jerusalem and see your family freed. Not having a choice Marko enlisted in the fifth crusade. Life was harsh during the many months of travel. Being neither a Frenchman nor a true Christian he was treated little better than a slave. Only the playing of his prized flute during the long and cold nights kept him from sinking into a pit of despair.

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Upon reaching Jerusalem he showed little skill with the sword and was soon branded a coward. As he slept the other soldiers striped him of his possessions and left him half naked in the desert to die. As a cruel irony they left his pipes half buried in the sand to keep him company. Starving and dehydrated Marko summoned all his will and lurched onward. As the noonday sun of the third day beat down on him he stumbled upon the body of a Moorish shepherd, blood still flowing from his wounds. As he drew closer he saw a swarm of rats tearing off strips of flesh and lapping up the spilled blood. Overcome with hunger and thirst he began to feast on the flesh, the trickling blood quenching his parched throat.

Feeling rejuvenated Marko traveled south to find the man village. To his surprise the swarm of rats that feasted with him followed in step, a single vermin army. Fearing that they would attack him as well he threw handfuls of sand and ordered them to flee. Again to his surprise the rats dispersed as if in a trance.

Entering the town Marko was overcome with a wave of nausea. Somehow he was able to smell the sent of the many men and women of the village as one would smell a piece of cooked beef. It was the children however that overwhelmed his senses. From them came a sweet smell, much like suckling pork, that made the young man's mouth water. Once again hungry he slumped against a wall and began playing in hopes of a few coins to buy a meal with. Never having had a minstrel in their town before the children gathered around the young man and danced and clapped along with his music. Almost overcome by the sweet scents the pipers mind was slowly filled with a strange tune. Turning the notes in his mind to notes on his pipes he walked to the gates of the town, several children dancing at his heels. As he looked around he saw the adults standing in a daze, eyes glazed over at the sound of the tune. Leading the children out into the desert he then turned only to see the swarm of rats returned, gruesomely slaying the children one by one. Overwhelmed with the hunger Marko dined along with the rodents on the morbid feast.

For nearly sixty years Marko traveled the length and breath of the world not aging a day, using gold for food when he had it, taking a town's children when he did not. He became so lost in the cycle of hunger that began to forget who he was, often going only by the name of the Pied (meaning dual colored clothing) Piper.

It was in the year 1284 that he entered the town of Hamelin, Germany bent on finding food. Using his power over the swarms of rats he had thought to force the town to give him enough gold to buy food for the coming winter. After being cheated by the town the Piper was furious and took the children in turn. Leading them high into a mountain cave he feasted long into the night as a soft mist rolled across the slopes...

When we woke he gazed out across not the Alps but the sharp peaks of the Balinoks.

For several years now the Piper has traveled to the many domains of the core stealing children in the night. The Dark Powers have caused the Piper to be unable to survive solely on normal food. He must feed on a child's flesh at least once a year or be forced to gouge himself on any available humanoid flesh.

## The Pied Piper

**Bogeyman: CR 8; Medium-sized Fey (Bogeyman);** HD 9d6+9; hp 44; Init +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Atk +8/+3 Melee (+6 Base, +2 Str) ; SA Calming tune, Summon swarm (vermin); SQ Control vermin, Tune of forgetfulness, vulnerabilities; AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +9; Str 15, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 18.

*Skills and Feats:* Move silently +8, Perform +14, Listen +6, Balance +10, Open Lock +6, Search +5, Spot +6; Ambidexterity, Improved initiative, Leadership, Run.

Appearing in lavish garb of brown and green, the arrival of the Piper is often mistakenly heralded as a time of revelry; a mistake that often costs a village their young. Among the

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many types of bogeymen the Piper is nearly unique in that he can be seen by people of any age and is often cursed by newly childless parents long after he has moved on to new hunting grounds.

Long before his arrival in a new village the Piper sends his hordes of mindless vermin to overwhelm the town in hopes of an easy abduction. No matter what the townspeople try the creatures will continue to invade, two taking the place of every one killed. After the creatures have become a nuisance the Piper appears piping a mournful tune causing the creatures to come out of their holes and emerge into the street. He will then make a deal with the leaders of the town, one gold piece payment for each rat killed. If the leaders agree the Piper will begin a long slow tune. All vermin within five miles will follow the Piper to a river or burning building to meet their demise.

If upon the destruction of the vermin the Piper is paid in full he will leave, never to return. However, if even one gold is missing the Piper becomes furious. Storming out of the village he returns at sunset dressed in hunters garb and wearing a strange red cap. He then begins playing a tune that echoes across the town. All those over eighteen years of age begin to fall into a lulled daze. They awake only to find their children missing, one child for every gold piece owed.

## Combat

**Calming Tune (Su):** The Piper extrudes an aura that levitates all worries and anxiety in children as per the Calm emotions spell but affecting all children in a one mile radius. Those exposed to it for more than three rounds feel that the Piper is their friend and will follow him anywhere.

**Summon Vermin (Su):** While traveling from town to town the Piper may summon 10d10+100 small one hp creatures to his side. These creatures are not under his control but will not harm him in any way. He can mentally send these creatures up to ten miles away before he loses contact.

**Control Vermin (Su):** The Piper can produce a tune that causes all vermin in a five mile radius to follow his simple commands as if charmed.

**Tune of forgetfulness (Su):** When played, this tune will cause all people over the age of seventeen (or the equivalent) to make a will save at (DC 20 + ½ Pipers HD + Charisma modifier) or enter a dazed state and to be unable to remember any events while under its effects.

**Vulnerability (Ex):** If the Piper is ever killed his essence will enter his pipes. At that time his swarm of rodents will take the pipes and leave them in public area to be found. If left undisturbed for more than a year the spirit of the Piper loses 1HD for every month past to a limit of 1HD. If in the possession of a potential host the Piper's spirit will regain hit dice at the same rate.

Anyone coming within 30' of the pipes' location will hear a ghostly tune being played on the winds luring them closer. If the pipes are picked up, the possessor must make a Will save at DC 25 or be compelled to try a tune on them. At that time the user must make another Will save at (DC10 + ½ Piper HD + Charisma mod). If failed the user's spirit is destroyed and their body is taken over by the spirit of the piper. If successful the user still feels compelled to keep the pipes with them at all times and must make another save every month.

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If the pipes are ever destroyed the Piper's essence is destroyed as well. The pipes have 20hp and AC 15.



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## THE TRICKSTER

### ODD THING COMES IN SMALL PACKAGES

By: Andrew Pavlides (alhoon)

An illusion master  
trickster, living off  
people's fears and  
credulity

#### Hensu "Immature" Grosto

**Ill6; small humanoid (gnome);** CR 5; HD 6d4+18; HP 33; initiative +2 (Dex); speed 20 ft.; AC 13 (+1 Size, +2 Dex); Melee bonus +4, ranged bonus +6, pistol ranged attack +5 (1d10); SA Spells, SQ: Gnome traits, familiar (owl); AL CN; Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +6; Str 9(-1), Dex 15 (+2), Con 16(+3), Int 18(+4), Wis 14(+2), Cha 11(+0).

*Skills:* Alchemy +10, Appraise +6, Bluff +3, Concentration +9, Craft (gem cutting) +7, Craft (clock making) +9, Craft (gunsmith) +9, Craft (trap making) +8, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (history) +6, Knowledge (engineering) +8, Knowledge (undead lore) +6, Knowledge (humanoid lore) +6, Spellcraft +9, Ride +3, Craft Wondrous Item, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (firearms), Extra Spell Slot (level 2), Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (illusion).

*Languages:* Gnome, Darkonesse, Balok, Mordentish, goblin, draconic.

*Wizard spells per day:* 4/5/6/4; DC 14 + spell level, or 16 + spell level for illusions.

*Prohibited school:* Evocation

*Equipment:* scroll of Phantom Steed, scroll of Mage Armor, 2 pistols, horn of gunpowder, 10 lead bullets, 2 flasks of alchemist fire, 1 flask of acid, 3 thunder stones, 1 potion of cure moderate wounds (heals 2d8+3hp), 2 doses of Taggit oil (Ingested poison, Fort DC 15, I/S 0/unconsciousness).

*Spellbook:*

0: all

1st: mage armor, obscuring mist, unseen servant, identify, change self, silent image, color spray, ventriloquism, burning hands, message.

2nd: melf's acid arrow, web, detect thoughts, continual flame, invisibility, magic mouth, minor image, pyrotechnics.

3rd: dispel magic, hold person, Illusory script, major image, phantom steed.

#### Familiar

Hensu's familiar takes the form of an owl, granting him the additional abilities therein. These abilities are not taken into account in Hensu's profile.

#### Appearance

Hensu stands at 3' 6" and is rounded in build from the good life he has. His hair is fair brown, he has a light tan complexion; he also sports a goatee. He prefers to wear dark brown or dark blue clothes.

#### Background

Hensu was born into a moderately successful family in Darkon, having never met his mother, who died giving birth to him. He has three elder siblings. His father was a respected merchant with some talent in the art of illusion. Hensu had everything in his young life except his mother. Being more intelligent than all of his family, classmates, even teachers, he quickly became arrogant, showing lack of respect from early age. The only other he truly respected was his great-grandfather, Inerion.

Inerion was skilled in illusions to a high degree and his intellect matched this prowess evenly. Among all his great-grandchildren, he loved and respected Hensu most. The child was showing great promise in becoming an intellectual young gnome, one that Inerion hoped would one day match the old gnome's

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intelligence and grasp for magic. Wanting someone worthy to continue his legacy, Inerion, wealthy from his many exploits and enterprises as a wizard, took Hensu in as an apprentice when he was only 35 years old. Hensu quickly grabbed the basics of illusions, furthering his already great arrogance and inner feelings of superiority.

He started playing pranks on his siblings, cousins, friends and just about everybody else out of boredom and jest, using his intellect and skills just to laugh at their expense and show them his obvious superiority over them. While most of his family tolerated these actions, his arrogance, lack of respect and the perverted humor earned him the nickname “Immature”. His father had many times warned Inerion that he was spoiling an already arrogant child but Inerion was blind to these aspects of Hensu, seeing only the child’s intelligence and skills with alchemy, magic and engineering. At the age of 60, Hensu was already surpassing most other novices of similar level.

Inerion died at the age of 360, when Hensu was just 78 years old, but the forty years under the old gnome’s tutelage had paid Hensu well, leaving him an accomplished illusionist. Losing the only gnome he truly respected, Hensu became more reclusive, concentrating mostly on his arcane and scientific studies. While age has made him more serious, he continued to commit humiliating pranks to his family, although not as often as before. He has also become more arrogant. While his family still tolerated him, as he was truly intelligent and wise for his years, his attitude made him quite unpopular. Nobody really regretted that Hensu was becoming more involved in his studies and ambitions. After all, he appeared to have rejected them first.

Nearly a decade later, Hensu decided he should leave. In his eyes, Hensu’s family was too dumb for him and it had become boring to almost constantly remind them of it. Also, he wanted to use his talents. On his 87th birthday, he announced to his family that he would soon leave to see more of the world and perhaps earn his living. He promised to come back from time

to time to visit them. While his father and siblings claimed they would miss him, nobody really tried to stop him. The distance between him and they was already great to bridge with any attempts to do so at that point.

Those able to see beyond his arrogance recognized that, being the intellect as he was, Hensu would succeed in his life and earn a fortune out there. Also, they hoped that real life would help him put his self-superiority in check. The others were not incredibly sorry that they would not have a young genius humiliating them and laughing at their expense.

## Current Sketch

So for about ten years now, Hensu has traveled to the more technologically advanced domains, visiting his home on a few brief, rare occasions. He has indeed proven successful, and he has earned much money during these travels. He never stays to one place more than a couple of years (and often less than six months), as he quickly grows bored and impatient, needing to fuel his wanderlust. He also avoids very large towns and cities, as well as smaller hamlets and thorps. These largely populated areas probably have the means to study his “ghosts” with greater scrutiny and talent. The very small will not have enough clients for the time he works there legally.

A few weeks before leaving a place he usually uses his abilities as an illusionist to emulate the effects of a haunting. Then he offers to help and “exorcise” the evil spirits for a price, reasonable but not cheap, depending on the size and resources of the village.

Hensu earns a trade as an engineer, alchemist and creator of firearms, clocks, traps and automatons. He charges high prices for these services but his creativity and skill matches the extraordinary prices attached to the work. He avoids overusing his magic where he works, although he doesn’t hide that he has ability with the arcane arts. He doesn’t want many people to know what tricks he can create, but he also needs the reputation of “strange arcane powers”, so that people will trust him to

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get rid of the “restless spirits”. Instead, he relies on parlor tricks to entertain those interested or curious about his abilities.

He has studied undead, especially ghosts, from his youth and knows about their powers and how such creatures manifest them. Being intelligent as he is, Hensu can imitate these effects so that even the most experienced “ghost hunter” would believe that there is a ghost or some other form of spirit around.

If some other ghost hunters volunteer to solve the problem, Hensu will try to scare them away, and if they do not leave, he will stop harassing the community with illusions for a time after the hunters take some logical steps to lay the “ghost” to rest. While trying to scare them, he will evoke horrifying illusionary scenes, not carrying too much, if anything, for the mental health of his “competitors”.

When creating a “ghost”, Hensu first studies the populace and local history. He finds something that might have drawn a ghost to existence and then decides on the “powers” of the “ghost” he will create. When the manifestations begin, he will read the thoughts of many witnesses and also of people that heard the story, learning what they fear and believe most, then he attempts to incorporate these aspects into the “spirit”. With these efforts, he constructs a more plausible creature to plague the community.

He sees these antics as a large yet profitable prank, naming the gold he takes from the scared villagers “the fools tax”, for it is foolishness that pays his way in these escapades. While he is extremely confident with his abilities, he makes sure that there are no other illusionists where he settles, and that there is also nobody with experience in illusions or magic. This is quite easy in most villages and smaller towns.

Hensu may be dishonest, but has aided hunters in their efforts to defeat minor villains and some weaker undead. Still, while in these cases he doesn’t help for money, he grabs as much as he can after the deed is done.

Likewise, he will not throw himself in the path of three marauding hill giants even for a hundred screaming children. Instead, he will try to at least delude the enemy with illusions from a safe distance in hope of his escape. If there is no chance for this strategy to work, he tries at least to save himself. He is not the type of character that will “waste” his single invisibility spell to make a pregnant mother carrying her two infants at her arms disappear. If his escape aids that of others, he is willing to accept the notion.

Hensu always works alone, because he doesn’t trust partners and believes that few others with intelligence matching his own exist. He doesn’t want to share the “fool’s tax” with another and he is reclusive by nature.

If Hensu is ever exposed in his deception, he will try to negotiate his way out, offering money, firearms or even to craft a wondrous magical item. If he finds a safe way to go against his word he will do so. If negotiations fail, he will try to escape, probably through the use of a phantom steed, or illusions. If caught in his pranks, he will surrender until an opportunity to escape arises. If he is incarcerated, he worries little about this. Having centuries to live, a few years in a musty cell are not that much to him.



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## Combat

Hensu is not a skilled fighter, but will rely on his pistols if forced to do so. In such occasions, his actions are always defensive, as he is not evil and takes no pleasure in taking the life of another. Also, he may yet be able to make profit from the individual.

If confronted with a dangerous situation, Hensu will react as any “reasonable” gnome, which means that he will become invisible and escape. If forced to fight, he will use whatever protection his spells may grant him and then either use offensive spells (hold person, web) if he has one memorized, or throw acid and alchemist fire at his enemies. He prefers to use alchemist fire, as it gives him a chance to escape while the enemy tries to put out the flames. If the enemy is out of the reach of the alchemist fire, he will resort to his guns.

While creating a “ghost” to fight, he will try to keep it out of sight, “manifesting” the powers only, and giving the witnesses a brief glimpse of his creation. He will, of course, be invisible when using his illusions.

## Lair

Hensu has no permanent base. He travels a lot and rarely visits his home.

## Sample Haunting

Let’s assume there is a house in the village where someone went missing and the person’s fate is unclear, but he is considered dead. Hensu has never seen the man, but it is well known that he had no enemies. His widow still lives in the village with any children the couple had, one of them old enough to work and feed the family.

If Hensu has learned that the man went missing a few nights before the full moon, he would probably “accuse” werewolves for his death. He will decide on implying that the man was kidnapped by werewolves and eaten alive under the full moon.

From his knowledge about ghosts he would summarize the following powers:

**Ability for minor telekinesis** (mage hand)

**Audible and visible phantasms** (illusions).

At first, invisible, he would come out of the home at a night with a full moon, when the victim’s widow is getting ready to go to bed. With a mage hand spell he would knock the window. When the widow peers out, she will discover nothing out of place. Then, with a ghost sound spell, he would create a noise of the door opening just behind her. When the startled widow turns to look and find the door closed as she has left it, Hensu will read her mind with his detect thoughts spell. After doing this, he will leave, returning the next night to “haunt” the widow, based on her fears and thoughts collected on the previous night. Perhaps this time he will toy with the eldest son, continuing to escalate the haunt and the actions therein as time passes.

While the effects are at first will be simple, to alert the locals, they later become far more terrifying as, for example, the fleeting image of a shadowy man passing the open doorway. When the “manifestation” is investigated, Hensu may use an illusion to create a trail of blood drops that lead off to nowhere. These drops fade soon after they touch the ground. Then Hensu would give up the illusion and the witnesses would see that the door now seems closed.

Later on, he would expand the appearance of the “ghost” to terrorize the entire village, but not too much, just to make them feel uncertain and insecure, basing the apparitions on the fears of the populace. For example, he may cast a web, then make it invisible, blocking a road at dusk. With this simple trick he will probably trap some not-so-smart villagers, then he may cast a minor image to write “HELP ME !!!” with blood on the nearest surface. Not long after that, he would come to the mayor to offer his services to send the ghost away and ask for a reasonable price for this “dangerous” kind of job. He is very creative with his spells, so you would be creative also.

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When the mayor agrees to pay the amount, Hensu would make a spectacular “exorcism” creating the necessary ritual areas and patterns, burning actually cheap alchemical substances, saying they are expensive incense, dancing wildly and chanting in Draconic or another strange language, possibly one he has created that very moment. At the end, he will cast a major image of the blood dripping figure being drawn to the center of the ritual area, where he will fight with two illusionary werewolves, defeat them, and then he will smile, salute, and meld with the ritual area and patterns.

Hensu will remain two or three days more to the village to “inspect just in case something went wrong” and then go to the mayor, declare that the village is safe, collect the reward and leave.

Special thanks to the lost Hedgewitch for editing this article.



The Undead Sea Scrolls

**Dread Tools ...**

**Scientiae Arcanum**

## THE EBON LYRE

THE HOPE FOR A GOOD ENDING IS NO EXCUSE FOR EVIL MEANS

By: Hugo Viegas  
Nascimento  
and Luiz Eduardo Neves  
Peret

An evil musical  
instrument made of  
sorrow, regret, obsession  
and infernal inspiration.

In Ravenloft, more than one adventurer has been deceived by the idea of an evil deed being necessary for the greater good. While there surely are lesser and greater evils roaming the Land of Mists, one should not be too quick to judge and easily overlook what seems to be a lesser evil. In the end, it is most likely that a lesser evil will eventually lead to a much greater one.

### Appearance

The Ebon Lyre is a 20-inch long lyre, apparently made of some dark, metallic alloy, finely crafted in semblance of a pair of antelope's horns. Its strings look like long, black human hair that has received some special hardening treatment. An intricate complex of diminutive and colored gems adorns the horned sides, creating twisted patterns, which shine against the deep black metal, catching the eye in a hypnotic swaying. A large egg-shaped red ruby marks the middle of the instrument's base. Overall, it looks elegant and quite expensive.

### A Tale of Love and Heroism

A long time ago, a brave group of adventurers stalked the Land of Mists going after evil in whatever form it took. They were experienced and bold, rarely accepting new members to their ranks, and discouraging most would-be candidates with their tales of death, pain and unending terror. While some might see this as contradictory, for surely more heroic people could and should be welcome to join the eternal battle against the horrors of the Land, they thought they were actually sparing the life those (usually young and reckless) applicants, saving them from their own excessive eagerness to meet death. Or so they thought at the beginning: in time, they were so used to each other's presence, methods and personalities, that accepting new, young and inexperienced members seemed "wrong".

But all that changed one day. While the group investigated the depredations of a vampire on a small town, the party's leader and spokesman, a fearless warrior, was fascinated with the town's bard, a lovely young woman, about 15 years younger than himself, who was more than happy to help the party find clues about the beast. In their final confrontation at an abandoned mine, the young artist was quite helpful, using her delicate yet powerful songs to bolster the group against hordes of zombies and ghouls. She even helped cure the group's wizard when he was hit by an undead abomination and the cleric was engaged in another combat far from the spot.

When the battle was over and the group prepared to leave, the bard asked to go with them. Although the party had a strict policy regarding new members, the leader was swayed by her beauty, courage and talent, and accepted

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her presence. The others did not complain, understanding all too well what was going on between the two of them.

Before a year had passed, the young woman was perfectly in harmony with the others, and her relationship with the elder fighter improved. By the end of the year, the party's cleric celebrated their wedding.

This would be the happy ending for any other tale. But this was when the problems began. The fighter, tired of battling evils, wanted to settle down with his wife. She, instead, having experienced just a taste of the world, wanted to continue adventuring. They quarreled more and more about this, and things got even worse as he was obviously becoming weaker with age, while she was still blossoming. During one unsuccessful attack at a hag covey, the fighter was cursed by the wicked trio and aged rapidly. After having dispatched the monsters, the group tried to bring him back but, despite their best efforts, they could do nothing.

This was the last drop to overflow the cauldron of problems. The bard wanted to stay at the fighter's side, for she truly loved him, but also wanted to go out in adventures. He did not want her pity and understood her yearning for more battles, investigations and rescues. So they parted ways and he stayed in an isolated property he had managed to acquire with his savings over his many years of adventuring.

But he could not rest, knowing that she was away, probably in danger, while he was impotent to help. His thoughts, first of true concern, then became of self-pity and then deep anger and resentment. These attracted the attention of a fiend, who was delighted with the possibility of corrupting so brave, good and wise champion of goodness. The creature approached the fighter in dreams, offering the opportunity to be once again strong and young, by sharing its own essence with the old man.

After spending a while resisting, the fighter finally succumbed to the demon's persuasive words and allowed the transposition

to begin. In the meantime, the adventurers continued on with their missions, but the bard started to question her own reasons, and to feel guilty about the way she had left her first and only true love.

When the group returned to visit their former companion, they found the place empty and torn apart. It took them a long time and a lot of investigation to find their friend, and by the time they finally reached him, the final stage of transposition was complete.

A tremendous battle took place, but in the end the group prevailed. That was a bitter victory, though, for the fiend's final words were to the bard, telling her how her husband had fallen so easily to evil because of her, and what would be his final fate, alone and lost in the Abyss.

As the group killed the monster and destroyed its phylactery, the bard, now an expert and schooled master of the magical arts, had a sudden insight. Despite the cleric's warnings, she took the beast's black, twisted horns with her, as a "souvenir" from that battle. Shortly after that, she parted ways with the group, claiming that her lover's death had been too much and that she needed to stop and think about it, perhaps stop adventuring altogether. While the others understood her grief, the cleric, who was also a member of the Order of the Guardians, grew suspicious. He did not say a word, though.

The bard retreated to her husband's manor house and feverishly started an unholy work, using her knowledge of music and magic to create a magical instrument. Although she did know that nothing good could come of the remains of a foul monster from the depths, she considered that a lesser evil, in light of what she could be able to accomplish: as the fiend had entered the world through a psychic connection with the fighter, she would use the demon's remains as a musical instrument and compose a song to summon the fighter back from the Abyss!

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She spent almost all the money she had, collected the best materials and tools, bought the finest jewels to imbue with additional incantations, and used her own hair, hardened by a magical concoction, as the lyre's strings. The dark energies remaining in the horns and the bard's own obsession eventually took their toll on her. She became more and more concentrated with her creation, researching ever deeper and darker, forbidden secrets. Eventually, she began to experiment with magic not meant to be cast by mortal hands, and engaging in foul rituals and despicable practices.

Spreading rumors of some new evil rising attracted the attention of her former companions, who quickly came to investigate. Half-maddened with her own fall into darkness, paranoid and terrified with the fact that her own friends were trying to prevent her from saving her beloved husband, she unleashed a horde of monstrosities upon them and, in the end, used the already finished Lyre to summon the fighter.

Unbeknownst to her, the fighter had died long before in the pits of the Abyss, and the corrupt energies of that place turned him into a loathsome abomination, a bodak. The creature approached the bard while she fought against her former friends, and as she turned to embrace it, blinded in her madness and grief, the monster's gaze froze her in death. The party managed to drive the other monsters away, at the cost of half their numbers, but the bodak, with the bard's body in its arms, ran away. The Lyre was lost in the turmoil.

## Current Sketch

The Ebon Lyre's whereabouts are unknown. Tales tell of its tremendous powers being used, and then of an undead abomination coming forth as if trying to catch it, yet being eluded every time. Meanwhile, the party's cleric, one of the only survivors of that day, still looks for it, and the Order of the Guardians is actively sending others to help him.

## Powers

The Lyre contains the last drops of essence of a powerful demon. While it is not a true outsider artifact by itself, there is enough outer-planar energy in it to generate a weak 30-foot-radius reality wrinkle.

The Lyre's powers are intimately linked with the great talent of its creator and manifest better with someone who has similar skills. A character merely holding the Lyre will receive a +2 enhancement bonus to all Charisma-based checks, including skill checks, and also a +2 enhancement bonus to the DC of any Charisma-based powers used (as with a bard or sorcerer). A character with 10 or more ranks in Perform has enough sensibility to "sense the inspiration" the Lyre radiates, eventually "composing" tunes similar to the original songs the Lyre was created to play. Each power is usable as if by a 20th-level bard, a number of times per day equal to 3 + user's Charisma modifier, each once per round as a standard action, except as noted below:

**Song of Disruption:** except for the number of times per day and the standard action involved, this song works similar to the bard's "countersong" ability (PHB, page 28).

**Song of Enthrallment:** this lovely tune has an effect similar to the bard's "fascinate" ability (PHB, page 28).

**Song of Whispers:** this hypnotic song works just as the bard's "suggestion" ability (PHB, page 28).

**Song of Halting:** this tune works as a Hold Monster spell.

**Song of Unholy Attraction:** this song attracts 1d4+1 ghosts or 2d8+2 ghouls from a distance equal to (Perform check result x 1000) in yards. After they arrive, the creatures are under the user's command for a number of minutes equal to 3 + user's Charisma modifier, but even after

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that they do not attack the user unless attacked first. This song functions only once per day.

**Song of Death:** this song functions as a Wail of the Banshee spell cast at 20th-level. It works only once per week. Anyone killed by this power rises in 1d3 days as a ghoul.

**Song of Calling:** this dread power can be used to summon a creature from the Lower Planes, but only if the user knows the creature's true, full name. This was the Lyre's main objective. The power can be used only once per month, when the full moon is at its apex.

## Curses

So powerful an artifact, from such a dark origin, had to carry a powerful curse as well. The Ebon Lyre is Chaotic Evil, has Intelligence 15, Wisdom 15, Charisma 20 and Ego 22. Instead of taking full control of the user's mind, however, it tries to subtly corrupt her, making her commit ever darker deeds in the name of a greater, good objective.

Anyone killed while under the influence of the Lyre is doomed to return as an undead abomination. Most such unfortunates turn into ghouls, but a few, more powerful become intelligent ghosts or even wights, and those who were fully corrupted into foul actions may return as ghoul lords.

## Suggested Means of Destruction

The fighter who returned as a bodak is the key to the Lyre's destruction. A successful hit with the bodak's death gaze on the Lyre's largest ruby is enough to destroy the instrument, should it fail a Fort save. Somewhere deep in its twisted mind, it knows that and tries its best to find this cursed item. The Lyre, however, can sense any bodak's proximity within one mile and will do its best to make its current user take

it away. Also, the bard also rose as a bodak, and is currently following the Lyre for her own evil reasons. The Lyre does not trust its former creator and is trying to escape both creatures.

The Ebon Lyre's saves are as follows: Fort +11, Ref +7, Will +14. Against physical and magical attacks, the Lyre is immune to electricity, has acid, cold and fire resistance 20, SR22, damage reduction 20/+2, hardness 10 and 60hp. If damaged, it has fast healing 2.

## Adventure Hooks

- ♦ The Order of the Guardians is following the Lyre's most likely current owner, a bard or rogue with considerable musical talent, who used the Lyre to take over a local guild and eventually turned into ghouls those who dared oppose him. The Order wants to keep the Lyre safe while trying to find a way to destroy it. Unbeknownst to them, the bard may have been finally killed from a safe distance by one of the rivals and may have risen as a ghoul lord, bent on endless, frenzied slaughter;
- ♦ The Lyre has just come into the hands of an elderly, unattractive lady who is using it to conquer the courtesy of younger men, then discards them. Under the Lyre's corrupting influence, she has made some of the candidates get into deadly duels for her favors, and even indirectly, the Lyre is making the losers become undead a few days after they are buried. The Lyre is thus creating a small army of well-armed undead to protect itself should either bodak approach too much. Of course, such a large number of young men fighting each other to death for the favors of a woman who, until recently, was beneath social notice might raise suspicions.
- ♦ Another user is trying to trigger the Lyre's calling power to bring back a loved one from the dead, driven by the equivocated idea that the Lyre is able to resurrect any



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dead person. Naturally, every time the user experiments with a new power, something evil is most likely to happen, and the person is on the surest way to damnation. It is up to the heroes to stop history from repeating itself.

- ◆ The bodak who once was the bard has retained enough intelligence to devise a plan: after a few encounters with the Lyre and the fighter, she approaches the party posing as the “good” bodak (as bodaks are

mostly featureless and genderless, it would be difficult to tell the difference). She then tries to convince the party to retrieve the Lyre for her in order to destroy it. She obviously intends to turn against the party as soon as she can put her hands on the instrument. That is when the other bodak appears and the party will have to decide which bodak to trust, if any at all.



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## GUILLOTINE

### A VENGEFUL CURSE UPON THE UNJUST

By: Eddy Brennan  
(The Lost Hedgewitch)

The Guillotine is a  
cursed execution device  
located on a public  
square. When it is was  
used to execute an  
innocent man, all went  
wrong...

### Background

When the mists first withdrew and revealed the new land of Dementieu, the first few months that followed were fraught with a sudden rise in the crime rate, causing prison, both organized and improvised, to be filled quickly. This led to the need of a new solution, one that would end the overcrowding forever. After much talk, the guillotine was born, on paper to say the least.

The best designers, carpenters and blacksmiths were brought in to work on the design and construction, a grand fusion of oak and iron brought together into the perfect killing machine. The designs were absolute and the pieces unusual compared to what these people had worked on before, making the task awkward and terribly long. It took the best part of half a year before the instrument of death was finally complete. The Machine was placed upon a specially made stone platform, on display near the northern edges of the Guild Houses of Port-a-Lucine, where all could gaze upon it in awe and fear alike among one of the public squares.

Though it was complete, it had no name and it was several weeks before the first execution was arranged, upon which, it would be given one. The first execution was turned into a vast public event, it was prepared as a street festival, with a macabre, morbid twist where the convicted would be paraded along the streets. Onlookers were enthusiastically encouraged into hurling fruit and vegetables, and to spit at the Machine's first victims (a tradition that was encouraged to continue for all executions to come).

When the convicts arrived at the site of their execution, several collapsed in fear at the terrible visage before them. Upon the stone platform lay the Machine. Twenty-five feet of oak reinforced with iron supports, a long wicked blade attached to heavy ropes, in turn tied to horses that would pull the blade along its inevitable path.

Among these first few was a lady of some importance among société, a certain Madame Guillotte. With the name coined from her actions of killing her rich lovers with their own razors. She was the first of those to be executed and given the title the woman had been given and the similarity to the Machine itself, it was granted a name by the public, later adopted by all, Guillotine.

With the Guillotine in place, the city lost a number of its population to it, people began to covet the power they held over mortality and soon the city had become a much quieter place from the ever-decreasing crime rate. This brought some joy to the city, though this joy was shallow and empty. This happiness was bought with the blood of those that had died to bring it. The society itself seemed built upon a foundation of death and misery, rather than social progression.

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As the years passed in the city, more was discovered about the device. Small variations in the speed and sharpness of the blade could bring different ends, determined by the crimes of the convict. The executed were also changed to kneel, their eyes forced open, to look upon the oncoming blade.

Despite the many brought before the Guillotine, none among them were innocent of their atrocities against man and the laws of the land. All were truthfully guilty and convicted of horrible crimes.

This trackless record continued for nearly three decades and came to an end in the later days of 736 BC. Francious Bechant was, at the time, a successful thief and of high standing in the underground guilds that drilled their way through normal life, hidden completely from the unsuspecting. He was a member of société and highly respected among his peers as a man to watch in the future. His funding had opened several small theatres, galleries and schools for the arts. His contributions were small but many. Without doubt, he was popular with the common man that he hoped to better in time.

It was a cold evening when he traveled home from a grand gathering held for the reopening of the city's grand Opera House. As his coach traveled, it lost a wheel, splintered from wear. Rather than wait for assistance, he told his driver to wait with the carriage whilst he continued the rest of the way on foot. Walking the darkened streets, his journey was halted sharply with a terrible discovery that made him lose his dinner.

On his path, Francious happened upon a scene of violence, a street girl being attacked by a shadowed assailant. Francious drew his sword cane and beat off the attacker, wounding him in the process. The constabulary arrived as the assailant disappeared into the night, leaving Francious and the dead girl. His bloodied weapon was all the evidence they required to arrest him, despite his pleas of innocence. The prosecution was swift and by the following evening, Francious Bechant was confronted and

charged with the murders of four young women over the past several months.

Despite his watertight alibi, his conviction, brought about by his bloodied weapon drawn in defense was secured, and he, like many others, was taken to the Guillotine.

Like all others, he was forced to kneel, staring at the blade with unblinking eyes, unlike many however, his position in société allowed him to make a final statement to those that may listen. As he began his speech, the crowd was rowdy, many boos and hisses were cast over his own voice, though as he continued, they fell silent to hear his final words:

"After I pass from this world, let all innocents you condemn to this fate torment you!"

No sooner was this line finished, the blade, pulled by horses, was drawn along its deadly path and Francious' head toppled from his shoulders, his blood mixing into the deep stain that marked the death of many others. However, as his body fell, the Mists rose and swallowed all, filled with silence and the chilling touch of the grave. When they dissipated once more, nothing remained of the noble except his head and the pools of blood that lay drying on the platform.

## Appearance

Guillotine is of unusual design, the device placed with its blade traveling parallel to the ground, forcing the victim to kneel, facing their inevitable fate.

Running some twenty-five feet in length, allowing the blade to collect speed as the horses pull it, the device is a patchwork of weathered oak, iron and steel replacements where it was needed repair in the past. Though still true to the original designs laid down and followed to precision, it has become more

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efficient, often killing on the first cut, even among the slower deaths it brings.

The blade may also be raised and lowered by several inches by following separate tracks, allowing for different height among its victims. The blade may also be angled for cleaner or more brutal cuts. Given the amount of repairs and improvements placed upon the execution machine over the decades, the total weight of the terrible device is now estimated near seven or eight imperial tons.

## Recent History

After the execution of Francious, the event became something of a spectacle among the onlookers. It also marked the beginning of a sad era among those that prosecuted the guilt and sent them to the Guillotine. One by one, they all turned mad, some dying at the hands of those sent to arrest them, other simply disappearing from the public eye altogether.

However, these events were not seen as connected to the curse uttered by Francious and were ignored on the larger scale. The only exception to this strange chain of events was what became of the executioner himself, Louis Demarre, who suddenly retired overnight almost a month after the execution and disappeared and was said to have left Dementieu. Those who knew him mentioned that he was a haunted man in his final days as one that passed judgment over others.

Almost five years after Francious' unusual execution, another, tried and convicted of crimes he was innocent of, was brought before the blade and sent quickly into the grave. Soon after, like the events following Francious' execution, strange things were afoot among the parties responsible for the conviction.

The prosecutors began to see the condemned men wherever they looked. At first, the frequency of these visions was rare and random, though increased as time passed. The voice of the victim haunted their waking

moments and dreams of the victim haunted their sleep, dreaming of their own executions at the hands of the condemned. Their necks cut through the Guillotine's razor edge.

Again, within a year, all related to the execution were either dead, mad or somewhere between the two extremes, forever locked away for their own safety. Many were found to have taken their own lives, help being offered too late for those tormented souls.

Another has also been sent to the Guillotine since with similar, though less punishing results. It is worth mentioning that in the event of the last innocent sent to the Guillotine, the victim was not entirely innocent of the crimes brought against her. She was guilty of several convictions, though they were minor in regards to the whole of the atrocities brought against her. This leaves doubt on the moral standing of the curse and its details, whether those innocent, at least in part will always be avenged, maybe wrongfully, through the curse and its effects.

## The Curse

When Francious Bechant uttered his fateful curse, he set in motion a chain of events that are both horrifying and, at the same time, normally justified. The curse is a terrible one, robbing a person of his sanity and morals. Those who take part in the conviction or execution of an innocent (at least in part) that dies at the Guillotine has only a short time before the curse of their actions condemn them also.

The curse first manifests around three or four weeks after the execution, initially causing the persons responsible to suffer hallucinations of the innocent put to death. These hallucinations may come at any time and are normally minor at first, though grow in intensity as time passes.

Following this, the person starts hearing the dead person's voice during the sightings (this begins 2d6 weeks after the hallucinations begin). This slowly taxes the mind of the executioner

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and anything up to several weeks to months (3d8 weeks) after, this torment eventually saps him of both mind and spirit.

A Madness save (DC 20) is then rolled after a number of days equal to the Wisdom score of the curse's victim. If the person passes the save, the person retains his sanity for the time being. If failed, the target of the curse becomes paranoid with either psychotic tendencies or acute depression. This first check also brings about another part of the curse: haunting nightmares of the executioner being put to death at the Guillotine's blade for crimes he or she is innocent of. These crimes are identical to those the condemned was convicted of.

Madness saves are taken at intervals equal to the Wisdom score of the curse's victim with a cumulative -1 penalty to this score. When a save is finally failed, the victim goes mad and either becomes a Madman or Lost One (see Ravenloft Monstrous Compendiums 1 & 2 or Denizens of Darkness).

The same procedure is followed for every person that took place in the innocent's prosecution and execution.

## Ending the Curse

People targeted by the curse have a chance to atone for their actions; it is, however, a difficult path, and a strong mind and body are required to complete it. The person must first meet with the spirit of the innocent last claimed by the Guillotine. A spell such as Speak with Dead or Medium (described in Van Richten's Monster Hunters Compendium 2) will suffice on this part. Whilst this is done, an Atonement spell must be cast in order to ask for forgiveness. The spirit is free willed and will decide if the person deserves forgiveness; all is dependent on the argument, and testimony and morale actions of the curse's victim. If the attempt for atonement is refused, a person's mind instantly falls into insanity like others of the curse unless a Madness save (DC 25) is made.

A Remove Curse spell is also useful for the victims of the curse, though this only removes the current symptoms for a week, after which they return at the same strength they were at before and a Madness save (DC 22) should be rolled at that very moment.

The true way of ending the curse that Francious cast upon the Guillotine is to seek out Louis Demarre and have him brought before Francious's spirit. Francious will then attack the man. Trying to stop Francious will cause a Powers check (5%) upon all interlopers. Once Louis is dead, Francious will rest easily and the curse would be lifted.

### The Executioner, Louis Demarre (2<sup>nd</sup> ed)

7th Level Human Fighter, Chaotic Evil

Armor Class: 5  
Movement: 12  
Level/Hit Dice: 7+28  
Hit Points: 63  
THAC0: 10  
Morale: Fearless (19)  
No. Of Attacks: 3/2  
Damage/Attack: 1d12+8  
Special Attacks: Weapon Specialization  
Special Defenses: See Below  
Special Vulnerabilities: Nil  
Magic Resistance: See below  
Str: 18/00, Dex: 17, Con: 18,  
Int: 11, Wis: 7, Cha: 6

The Executioner, Louis Demarre (3<sup>rd</sup> ed), male human Ftr7: CR 9; Medium-size Human (6' 2"); HD 7d10+31; hp 64; Init +7; Spd 30 ft; AC 13 (+3 Dex); Melee +13/+8 Executioner's (Great) Axe (1d12+7/Crit x3); SA Weapon specialization; SQ Stamina, Immunity to Fear, Horror and Madness; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +0; Str 21, Dex 17, Con 18, Int 11, Wis 7, Cha 5.

*Skills and Feats:* Craft (Executioner) +8 (8), Hide +5 (4), Jump +9 (4), Swim +7 (3), Wilderness Lore +3 (5), Weapon Focus (Executioner's Axe), Weapon Specialization

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(Executioner's Axe), Power Attack, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Toughness.

*Equipment:* Executioner's Axe, backpack, rations, winter blanket and some memorabilia from his old life.

Louis is a large man but not tall, standing of average height. His physical might and build makes him appear much larger. He dresses in blood stained clothing, normally that which he has stolen off his victims. He is unwashed and is bald, whether he shaves his head or his hair loss is cause of another means is not known. He carries a large executioner's axe at all times and swings it with finesse in combat. Despite coming to the end of his middle years, Louis is as strong and agile as ever. If anything, he seems more powerful now than he ever was in his youth.

When forced into combat, Louis relies on his great strength and skill with the axe to cleave through his foes and victims. He is specialized in this weapon and these factors have been incorporated into his profile.

Since his disappearance, Louis has traveled the Demiplane, lost in his madness and bringing butchery upon the innocent. In recent years, he has returned to Port-a-Lucine, having been long forgotten and still attending every execution held in the city, fascinated by the entire spectacle that he once conducted.

Louis's insanity also causes him to believe that he also died when Francious did and takes little notice of the wounds he suffers, remaining on his feet until he is reduced to -10 Hit Points. Only then does he fall dead.

Louis is utterly insane and his warped mind is immune to all forms of Fear, Horror and Madness, as well as other mind-affecting spells and attacks. Making mental contact with him will inflict a Madness save (DC 20) on the person making contact.

His Executioner's Axe is very similar to the Great Axe described in the Player's Handbook.

## Adventure Hooks

- ◆ The City of Port-a-Lucine is being ravaged by a series of murders that spread panic and fear throughout the city. Suddenly, an important member of société disappears. This person shares a similar appearance to Francious Bechant that Louis Demarre finds captivating. He is holding this poor person captive and it is only a matter of time before his madness drives him to kill this man.
- ◆ Players help track down and convict a wanted criminal; unfortunately they have got the wrong man. Though he protests his innocence, he is put to death at the Guillotine. Several weeks after the event, the executioner becomes insane and commits suicide, leaving a letter of warning to others. The warning is cryptic and senseless and is ignored, then one of the players begins to see visions of the person they convicted. They must find a way to escape their fate and atone for the ill-gotten deed they helped fulfill before madness claims them.



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**Places...**

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# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## KARSS

### A PRISON WITHIN A PRISON

By: James E. Bowman (JEB)  
(Special thanks to  
Garrett Baumgartner)

A domain linking  
Ravenloft and the  
Planescape setting !  
Karss is a prison domain,  
with a very interesting  
darklord curse...

#### Landscape

Full Ecology (Temperate Plains). The small island of Karss is a barren land; a flat, empty expanse broken only by small patches of pale grass, and the occasional muddy watering hole. The air is just slightly warm and damp, as if before a spring storm. The cloudy sky ever seems to be on the edge of such a storm, but rain only comes rarely.

Seasons cause little change in the weather; the sky becomes slightly cooler in autumn and winter, and retains its normal conditions the remainder of the year. The mornings are often fog-shrouded, and the nights are always exceptionally dark; moonlight and the stars are also blocked by the cloudy skies.

The land is generally unsuitable for crops, as the soil is often too rocky and too poor in nutrients to support them.

There are no settlements in this domain; the only inhabited location is the so-called "Great Prison," which lies in the center of the island. The stark, five-story square structure towers over its surroundings, and is surrounded

on all sides by a tall iron-wrought fence, with a single gate facing south. The gray bricks that make up the building only serve to enhance the structure's imposing nature. The perimeter of the building's roof is covered in a series of short, spade-like shapes, with the roof itself curving from south to north and flat on the east and west sides. The sword-and-shield symbol of the Harmonium, owners of the Prison, is displayed prominently above the entranceway. Windows dot each level of the building, but all save those on the first level have been bricked up. The entire structure seems to be just barely kept from a state of disrepair; signs of frequent maintenance are obvious to the observant, especially along the sealed windows. Guard towers, each standing gray and tall like the main building, stand at each corner of the fence, always staffed by a few guards. Each guard is incongruously clad in ornate, well-crafted armor. A few small support buildings outside the fence are homes of the guards themselves, as well as the staff of the Prison. The only fields of crops, vigorously maintained but small in size, exist around and within the Prison grounds. A small area is kept for livestock as well.

#### Cultural Level

Chivalric (8). However, as supplies of materials from this CL dwindle, this may change.

#### Major Settlements

None. The Great Prison has roughly 430 inmates, as well as 30 guards and 26 staff.

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## The Folk

Population: 500; Humans 82%, Other 18%.  
Languages - Planar Common,\* Lower Planar  
Trade. Religions - none.

The people of Karss that most outsiders see are the staff and guards of the Great Prison.

These people are the healthier inhabitants of the domain; they're lean, but otherwise in fairly good shape. Their skin comes in a variety of shades, from pale and almost white, to darkest brown and almost black. Likewise, their hair comes in many colors, though it is always cut very short, always above and off the neck; this style is held by both males and females. Eyes also tend to be of a number of hues. The staff and guards are overwhelmingly human, though a very few elves, dwarves, and members of less recognizable races are also found among their ranks. The staff are clothed in plain, loose-fitting robes of gold, gray, and white, while the guards are all dressed in ornate armor colored gold or ruddy bronze. The armor is made of a sterner metal than those it appears as, however, and is equal to the best steel breastplate. The robes are often worn, but never dirty or torn, with each and every garment showing signs of care. The armor, likewise, may be slightly tarnished, but it is always polished and kept in excellent repair.

All of these people pledge allegiance to a group known as the Harmonium, and say that their goal is to enforce order. The Harmonium are primarily fighters, but there are a few wizards or clerics among them as well. The staff spend their days maintaining the grounds, repairing damage to the rapidly aging structure, and tending the food supply (both animal and vegetable). The guards constantly patrol the grounds, man the guard towers, or train for combat. Meals are eaten communally in a mess hall outside the prison walls, but conversation during such meals is minimal. Free time is rare, due to constant responsibilities. Males and females are discouraged from forming romantic ties, but years of necessary solidarity have made

most of the guards something akin to friends. A strong sense of duty characterizes the Harmonium spirit; after spending so many years on Karss, strict adherence to law and duty seems to be all that keeps them sane.

Overall, the Harmonium are rather dour people with precious little sense of humor. The only exceptions are those Harmonium specifically chosen to deal and trade with outlanders. They tend to be friendly to anyone who has something to offer and conducts themselves in a lawful and reasonable manner. Those that appear to the Harmonium to be less than honest in any way are often turned away, unless their goods are desperately needed. Unfortunately for the Harmonium pride, goods are nearly always "desperately needed."

Unlike most inhabitants of Ravenloft, the Harmonium appear to understand the fact that they are trapped in a demiplane. Those persons who already have some knowledge of planar matters are the only ones who have any hope of discussing such with them. Some of the guards also possess a great knowledge of Outsider abilities and weaknesses; however, recognizing the value of this information to the Clueless (as they call some outlanders), they only impart it to those willing to trade for it. Any and all attempts to gain access to the Prison are rebuffed in a brusque manner, and no questions about the history or nature of the structure will be answered, save for three bits of information; the name of the place, that it is their "duty" to guard and maintain it, and that the inhabitants are simply "Lawbreakers."

The Lawbreakers themselves are only rarely seen by those that pass by the Great Prison, due to the Harmonium's zealotry in concealing them from view. Those few that do see the Lawbreakers are haunted by the empty, hopeless bearing that surrounds them. Like the Harmonium, the inmates come in a variety of skin colors, though all have been shaved of body hair. They are thinner and less fit than the Harmonium, and a few are reported to be of a nature more fiendish than human. They are apparently more regimented than even their

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keepers, and they have no control over their lives. A rare work detail of somewhat healthier-looking prisoners may be seen by outlanders. Attempts to question them are actually permitted, but they seem unnaturally content with their lot and have little to say.

## The Law

Lawful totalitarianism. The Prison and its keepers are commanded by Warden Jonar Tamh, who is the absolute and unquestioned ruler of the island. However, he rarely issues edicts, preferring to adhere to the letter of established law. He does not molest any foreigners who come to the island, unless they invade the Prison or assist any of the rare escapees. He is relentless in his pursuit of those who violate his laws, and has on occasion even sent guards into the Misty Border in pursuit of particularly flagrant offenders. (This is a rarity, however; few guards have returned from such trips, and escapees have never been retrieved thus far.) He trusts his underlings implicitly, leaving his deputy Wilm Jazar to take on the menial tasks of managing the Prison and its surroundings, as well as dealing with visitors. The Lawbreakers have some representation, through a man named Nicolas, but his position seems to be more informant than anything influential.

## Trade and Diplomacy

Resources - wheat, barley, hogs, chickens. Coinage - none. Karss conducts trade through barter. It has some gold, silver, and copper currency from the time before it joined Ravenloft, but most of it was melted down into bars to use as last-ditch trade goods in lean times.

Karss desperately depends on trade to bolster its dwindling resources, but since no known Mistways led directly to the domain, visitors are few. The trade goods most in demand are foodstuffs, especially livestock.

Some guards and staff have been sent to try to locate supplies beyond the Misty Border, or a route to the lands that the occasional foreigners have come from, but few of these explorers have ever come back.

## Characters

There are no player characters native to Karss. The Harmonium do not leave unless on a mission, and Warden Tamh tries to ensure that no Lawbreakers escape the island. Harmonium members that are typically encountered are fighters of levels 1 to 5. Very rarely, a Harmonium wizard or cleric, also levels 1 to 5, may be met as well. All Harmonium have the faction ability to charm person (as a sorcerer equal to their level) once per day as a standard action.

### Jonar Tamh Darklord of Karss

Male aasimar Ftr10 (Harmonium): CR 10, SZ M Outsider (Lawful) (6 ft. 2 in. tall); HD 10d10+20; hp 80; Init +6; Spd 20; AC 20 (touch 12, flat-footed 18); Atk: +17/+12 melee (2d6+7 (+2d6 against chaotic creatures))/17-20/x2, +2 lawful greatsword) or +12/+7 ranged; SA Mass domination; SQ Outsider, aasimar abilities, Harmonium abilities; AL LE; SV Fort +10 Ref +6 Will +7; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 15, Wis 16, Cha 17.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +8, Craft (armorsmithing) +10, Craft (weaponsmithing) +8, Diplomacy +9, Intimidate +9, Jump +5, Knowledge (the planes) +6, Knowledge (local) +4; Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Expertise, Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Initiative, Jaded, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

*Languages:* Planar Common\*, Lower Planar Trade.

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*Signature Possessions:* +3 breastplate, +2 lawful greatsword, Cloak of Resistance +1.

Jonar Tamh is the only person in all of Karss who can be said to look "healthy." At 39 years of age, Tamh is heading into middle age, but he remains tanned and well-muscled. His prominent chin and patrician nose give him a stately look, but weary gray eyes mar his countenance. Like the other Harmonium, Jonar wears his white hair cut very short, above and off the neck, and keeps his face clean-shaven. His aasimar nature is not immediately evident, in part because his coloration seems visibly "dimmed" in some way. Jonar Tamh spends most of his time clad in typical golden Harmonium armor, along with a red cape signifying his special office.

## Background

Jonar Tamh was born in the 91st year of Factol Hashkar's Reign, in the the Lady's Ward in the extraplanar city of Sigil. Descended from parents whose lines had included many heroes of the Harmonium, Jonar grew up with a great respect for the law, and an unending admiration for the members of his parents' faction. As soon as he could do so, he joined the Harmonium. By the time he was 25, he had become one of the most efficient and well-regarded officers in the faction, and ascended to the rank of Mover One.

It was at that time that a group within the Harmonium began to express concerns over the treatment of the criminals within Sigil's prison, which was under the watch of the harsh Mercykillers. Feeling that the faction's punishing methods only encouraged further unlawful behavior, this group petitioned the Factol of the Harmonium with a new idea. They proposed an experiment; they suggested that a Great Prison be built, containing an environment focused less on punishing criminals, and more on reforming them into productive, law-abiding citizens. Intrigued, the Factol conferred with the Measures and Movers of the faction, and after some deliberation, they agreed to support the group's plan. The site chosen for the Great

Prison was the barren island of Karss, which was located on the Harmonium's Prime Material homeworld of Ortho; and the capable and devoted Jonar Tamh was chosen as the warden. Honored by their choice, Tamh set out to prove their confidence correct.

Five years later, the Great Prison was completed. Tamh chose a select staff from among the best of the Harmonium, including his best friend, Zet Keffen, who became his deputy. 450 prisoners were taken from Sigil to live in the Prison, and the experiment began. At first, the prisoners were fearful and cautious- for all they knew, the Harmonium would treat them as badly as the Mercykillers did. However, they soon learned that the Harmonium were trying to reform them, not punish them. Efforts were made to feed them well, give them daily exercise, and regiment their lives, all in an attempt to cleanse their spirits of unlawful tendencies. A few appreciated this, and these became some of the early successes, successes that gave Warden Tamh a great deal of pride. However, the majority found this situation ludicrous, and reacted with mockery, scorn, and eventually, outright disobedience.

As incidents of violence increased, Tamh became worried. He feared that this great experiment would fail, and with it his flawless reputation. He began to use harsher measures, restricting free time, increasing the number of guards, and subjecting the worst offenders to reduced rations or even solitary confinement. However, rather than cowing the population, the prisoners became resentful, and resistance and trouble increased. Tamh responded to this defiance by making the conditions even more harsh, making the Great Prison little better than its Sigil counterpart. All the while, he downplayed the situation to his superiors in the Harmonium. Some subordinate Harmonium became troubled by Tamh's actions, so he had them replaced with more loyal, less questioning faction members. However, the prisoners continued to cause trouble, disdaining the guards and raging at their punishments.

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By the time a year had passed, Tamh began to grow paranoid; he entertained notions that the Mercykillers, the Anarchists, or even evil powers were causing his Prison to fail. Never did he consider the possibility that he could be responsible for the problems. He became determined to succeed, confident that if he toughened measures enough, he would make the prison a bastion of order. Starvation, isolation, and whippings became common punishments. To isolate the prisoners from "negative outside influences," the windows on every level but the first were bricked up. Finally, one night, Zet confronted Tamh in his quarters. He tried to sway him from his obsession with bringing order to the prisoners, and bring his focus back towards the experiment's original aims. However, Tamh was beyond convincing, and Zet gave up. As he left, he stated that if he had to bring the situation to the Factol, he would.

At that moment, Tamh panicked. His reputation would be shattered, forcing him to leave the Harmonium; and surely the Prison would be shut down, releasing the hordes of chaos held within. In a moment of madness, Tamh attacked his friend, trying to force his silence. Zet fought back, and in the heat of battle, Tamh slew Zet with his greatsword. Wracked with guilt, Tamh rationalized the murder as "a necessary evil in the war against chaos," and managed to cover up the crime with the help of a few loyal guards. Two troublesome prisoners were blamed for Zet's death, and they became the first criminals the Great Prison executed.

By now, Tamh's superiors in Sigil were suspecting that something was wrong. At the same time, rumors of a planned mass uprising reached Tamh's ears. Feeling besieged from all sides, desperate to save his reputation and channeling his guilt into anger, the warden determined to enact a pre-emptive attack on the forces of chaos within his Prison's walls. Gathering 28 of the most outspoken and problematic inmates, he had each of them hanged, one after the other, each being forced to watch the ones who went before them die. As

the last prisoner was hung, the sky dimmed, and a strong hurricane rose, forcing Tamh and his guards to take shelter. When the storm passed, Karss and the Great Prison were no longer on Ortho- they were in the Realm of Dread.

## Current Sketch

Panic swept the Prison after Karss entered Ravenloft, but Warden Tamh quickly discovered that his Harmonium abilities had been magnified; he now had the power to pacify and control large numbers of the inmates. Finally, he was able to impose order on the masses in the Prison. However, he soon determined that there was a drawback; any suffering that befell those he controlled afflicted him as well. As such, he only uses his new powers sparingly. Tamh felt the loss of some of his aasimar nature when he gained the new abilities, and realizes that some sort of exchange was involved, but refuses to speculate beyond that.

Since 747 BC, when Karss became an island of terror, conditions have deteriorated. The island had been primarily dependent on outside supplies, and while substantial reserves existed, they were not designed for over a decade of isolation. Tamh has imposed stringent controls on the use of basic supplies, controls that leave the Lawbreakers with barely enough to survive on. He cares only for the Lawbreakers' welfare so far as regulations are concerned; illnesses and injury are only treated when they are determined as immediately life-threatening. Further, he uses extraordinary punishments for the slightest offenses, desperate to prevent any threat to the tenuous order. Before, the prisoners disdained and despised him; now they fear and hate him. Yet, they are afraid to challenge him, since the few that have since Karss entered Ravenloft have suffered severe tortures or worse.

The suffering the Lawbreakers constantly endure- from starvation, sickness, or punishment- makes any attempts by Tamh to mentally dominate them agonizing.



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However, as the situation worsens, Tamh is forced to use his powers more and more to keep order. The pain involved is beginning to wear him down. The warden desperately seeks a way to alleviate the supply situation, not because he feels for the Lawbreakers' suffering, but because he wants to ease his own. However, only the slightest success has come from any approach. A few Harmonium have suggested abandoning the Prison and releasing the prisoners into the Mists, but Tamh won't hear of it.

Tamh has used some of the hardier Lawbreakers as slave labor, using his abilities to control them for the duration of whatever work needs done. Typical tasks have included attempts to create new fields for crops, seeking out water supplies, and repairing the Great Prison itself. The warden does allow those prisoners whose sentences have ended to leave, provided they have refrained from any transgressions since entering the Prison; however, with such a requirement and the insufferable conditions, few have ever left.

Tam's situation is not helped by disappearances of guards and staff in the Prison. The bodies of the 28 hanged were never found after the storm, and the population of the Great Prison speak in whispers of seeing the dead men stalking the halls. The warden himself is haunted by the geist of Zet Keffen, whose presence constantly reminds him of his sins. Keffen only appears when Tamh is alone, however, so he tries to keep a guard or a member of the staff nearby at all times.

## Combat

Tamh prefers to avoid combat, instead using his mass domination powers to forcibly pacify attackers. If that fails, he will fight, but only with the support of his guards.

In combat, Tamh will always use Axiomane, his +2 lawful greatsword. The blade has been in the Tamh family for generations, reportedly a gift from his celestial ancestor. Like

its owner, however, the greatsword has been tainted; the weapon became cursed when it was used to slay the lawful Zet Keffen. Tamh does not truly feel the familial connection to the weapon that he once did; this is because Axiomane is now linked to Zet's spirit. Whenever the sword is used to inflict more than 12 points of damage on a foe, Zet's geist becomes empowered, gaining the manifestation ability and becoming a full-fledged rank two ghost for the next hour. Zet usually seeks out and attacks Jonar while he has such opportunities. With actual battle so rare in Karss, however, Tamh has not made the connection between use of the sword and Zet's temporary increases in power.

Jonar Tamh never uses ranged weaponry, as he prefers to confront his foes face to face.

## Special Attack

**Mass Domination** (Su): This ability acts as the spell dominate person, as cast by a 10th-level sorcerer. However, Tamh may use this ability on a number of people equal to twice his level, and may maintain its effects for a full hour. He may also use this ability on more people for shorter durations; three times his level for 40 minutes, four times his level for 20 minutes, five times his level for 5 minutes, or six times his level for one minute. Tamh may use this as a standard action on anyone within his line of sight. A Will save against DC 18 allows a target to resist the attack. However, this ability differs in a few ways from the standard spell. Firstly, any native of Karss has no ability to resist these commands, and does not gain the saving throw usually accorded for a command to act against their nature. Secondly, there is a drawback; unlike the standard dominate person spell, Tamh receives the tactile sensory input of those he commands. Any physical damage inflicted on any under his control acts as equivalent subdual damage to his own body. He also feels the hunger, aches, and all other forms of physical discomfort that are felt by those he dominates. If he dominates a being that is already in physical discomfort or

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pain, he must make a Will save (DC 13) or suffer the equivalent of a daze spell.

## Special Qualities

**Outsider:** Jonar Tamh has the usual abilities and weaknesses of Outsiders, with one exception: Tamh received 30 corruption points upon becoming a Darklord, and as such, he has no reality wrinkle.

**Aasimar Abilities:** Like all aasimar, Tamh has acid, cold, and electricity resistance of 5, and receives a +2 racial bonus to Spot and Listen checks. Unlike most aasimar, however, Tamh has lost the spell-like ability to use light once per day. He rarely used the ability, so his fellows have failed to notice, but he is aware of the loss and fears to speculate on its meaning.

**Harmonium Abilities:** Tamh gains a +1 bonus to attack rolls with his greatsword. He also gains a +3 bonus to save against fear (including the dragon's Frightful Presence special ability), all spells and spell-like abilities with the Fear descriptor, and other emotion-related spells and spell-like abilities (such as emotion and eyebite).

## The Lair

Warden Jonar Tamh lives in a rather spartan building just outside the Great Prison's fence. Despite its plain appearance, however, this gray stone structure was where Tamh killed his friend and deputy Zet Keffen. The presence of Zet's geist maintains this area as a rank 2 sinkhole of evil. The suffering inside the Great Prison, which is where Tamh spends as much of his time as possible, makes it a rank 3 sinkhole of evil.

## Closing the Borders

Tamh cannot close the borders of his domain. However, when someone escapes or transgresses against him, he will use every means at his disposal- guards, staff members, even prisoners under his control- to capture them before they can reach the Misty Border.





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## TSUU-Y-TEKE

### THE NIGHTLESS LAND IN 3<sup>rd</sup> EDITION

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This is the 3e version of the aboriginal Nightless Land, a harsh land scorched by a relentless sun, and where shadows and night mean danger and death.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: This article is a conversion of the domain of Tsuu-Y-Teke (from the Book of Shadows, found in the Kargatane website) to the 3rd edition. The domain's history mostly remains the same, and therefore they will not be reproduced here. This article intends only to adapt the specific features of the domain to the system, so that it can be played in accordance to the Ravenloft setting in 3rd Edition.

### Landscape

Full Ecology (Warm Deserts, Hills and Mountains). Tsuu-Y-Teke (TSOO-ytek), which means "House of the Sun", is a vast and warm land of desert plains, riddled with tablelands, canyons and mesas. Just a handful of permanent rivers cross its more than 5,000 square miles, and are surrounded by the only few tree groves available. Cacti and desert flowers exist everywhere else. It rains only at winter time and most of the weak showers evaporate long before

touching ground, what adds to the fragile environmental moisture and helps all creatures endure the heat.

In the shadowed areas within the canyons, dire versions of the buffalo and the antelope can be found in large herds, along with normal coyotes, pumas, wild horses and mountain varieties of sheep and goats. High above, normal and dire vultures rule the open skies. Most hills, canyons and mesas are hollow, giving space to large, dark caverns full of bats, dire bats, rodents and vermin of all kinds.

The most intriguing aspect of this land is the length of the day. For nine months of the year, the sun appears from behind the eastern mountains by 4 AM. and slowly crosses the sky, hiding only after 8 PM. In the only mildly cooler winter, the sun rises one hour later and sets one hour earlier. Even then there is little comfort for the inhabitants, however, as some unexplained atmospheric phenomenon keeps the bright orange and pink colors of twilight almost always visible, letting starlight blurred and faint in comparison. The moon also seems larger than in other lands, and the full phase takes seven nights instead of three. The darkest and coolest night of the month is the only one when the twilight finally gives in to darkness and the moon is also on its dark phase. Locals call this night Ahadu-Lubu-Byu (aha-DOO loo-DOO bee-OO), "The True Night", and avoid leaving home at this time. This is the time of the Vulture, they say.

**Cultural Level:** Stone Age  
(1).

### Major Settlements

Berohokan (pop. 300), Inan-son-Wera (pop. 200), among several other smaller pueblo cities.

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*(drawing by Dion Fernandez)*

creatures, sent by the Sun Puma himself to cleanse the land. Most are natural, but some human clerics accept the blessing and are willingly infected during an elaborate ritual. Werevultures, on the other hand, are spies and clerics under the command of the dread Vulture King, a legendary undead monster that, according to legend, is responsible for the eternal daylight and the horrible heat, but was cursed to stay trapped in the darkness of the deep caves for all eternity. These creatures are summarily banished or executed whenever they are found, so they have learned to keep a low profile. The natural ones will occasionally infect a human to divert unwanted attention from themselves.

## The Folk

Population - 1,500; Humans 99%; Other 1%; 40 natural werepumas, 30 natural werevultures. Language - Inan\*. Religions - the Sun Puma\*, the Vulture King.

The Inan (ee-NAN), or "true people" are aboriginal, tanned, hardened by the scorching sun and never ending labor in order to survive the harsh environment. They are prodigious hunters, running across the land in light moccasins, wearing comfortable leather and wool clothes and adorning their hair with bright-feathered headdresses. They complement their adornments with elaborate tattoos that show (to the trained eye) the person's marital status, profession, social position, family tree and any special event lived.

They are reclusive and quite suspicious of strangers (especially spellcasters), who might be "Kuni-Bina" (koo-NEE bee-NAH), evil spirits disguised as people. Their generic word for "spirit" is "Kuni", and they believe such treacherous entities to infest all places, always wandering under disguise, as animals or humans.

A small but steadily increasing population of natural lycanthropes can be found in the pueblos. Werepumas are seen as blessed

## The Law

Theocratic commonwealth. Priests of the Sun Puma and elders of both genders rule each pueblo in councils, meeting at the Sacred Mask Hall once per month to discuss community matters.

## Trade and Diplomacy

Resources - wheat, corn, wool, leather, herd animals, salted meat, crudely cut gems. Coinage - none.

## Characters

Clerics, druids, fighters, rangers (rogues, sorcerers and wizards are outlawed but can be found in evil-aligned communities). Skills - Climb, Craft (bowmaking, brewing, carpentry, gem cutting, leatherworking, tattooing, weaving), Hide, Knowledge (nature), Move Silently, Perform (drums, long flute, storytelling), Profession (herbalist, herdsman, hunter), Wilderness Lore. Feats - Dodge (plus derivatives), Fearless, Jaded, Point Blank Shot (plus derivatives), Run, Skill Focus (Craft,

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Wilderness Lore), Weapon Focus (longbow, shortspear).

## Special Encounters

### Heresa-Bedu

#### Large Magical Beast

**Hit Dice** 5d10+15 (42hp)

**Initiative:** +3 (Dex)

**AC:** 15 (–1 size, +3 Dex, +3 natural) touch 12, flat-footed 12

**Speed:** 10ft., fly 70ft. (average)

**Attacks:** 2 claws +9 melee, bite +4 melee

**Damage:** Claw 1d6+4, bite 1d8+2

**Face/Reach:** 5ft. by 5ft./10ft.

**Special Attacks:** Contagious bite, curse, spells

**Special Qualities:** Command scavengers, command undead, dominate werevulture, DR10/flint

**Saves:** Fort+7, Ref+7, Will+3

**Abilities:** Str 18, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 10

**Skills:** Knowledge (nature) +4, Knowledge (religion) +4, Listen +8, Sense Motive +6, Spot +8\*, Wilderness Lore +6

**Feats:** Alertness, Still Spell

**Climate/Terrain:** any warm deserts, mountains, caves and plains (Tsuu-Y-teke)

**Organization:** Solitary, pair or band (5-8)

**Challenge Rating:** 7

**Treasure:** Standard, no coins

**Alignment:** Usually neutral evil

**Advancement Range:** 6-9HD (Large)

Heresa-Bedu are a vile (and fortunately rare) breed of magical creatures created by the Vulture King. When a particularly devoted, powerful and evil Ohoty-Bedu dies, its soul lingers for a while as a ghost, bound to his corpse. The Vulture King may choose to keep the evil soul around and working for him, by permanently binding the ghost to a dire vulture in a special ritual performed on the dead priest's body. As the ritual can be performed only during the True Night, however, the Vulture King delays it as much as it can, for this is also the only night in the month that the darklord can fly freely through the open skies. Heresa Heri can bind the ghost of a priest that has been dead for

no longer than a month per priest level, and he can use this ability only on 5th- to 9th-level priests. Heresa-Bedu speak Inan with a screechy accent and may freely converse with all birds.

### Combat

Heresa Bedu usually fight only when they cannot subdue prey using their spells or minions. They like to use their contagious bite and see the victim slowly succumb to the disease.

**Contagious Bite (Su):** any living creature hit by the Heresa-Bedu's bite attack must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 13) or suffer from a magical disease after one day of incubation. The victim suffers 1d3 points of Constitution damage per day until cured or dead. This disease cannot be cured without magic help. Victims killed by the contagious bite of the Heresa-Bedu rise as desert zombies under their creator's control.

**Curse (Su):** the Heresa-Bedu can curse a single individual per month with werevulture lycanthropy. The victim may try to resist the curse with a Fortitude save (DC13).

**Spells:** a Heresa-Bedu casts spells as a cleric of the Vulture King of the same level. If he gains more HD, it also gains extra levels of spellcasting.

**Command Scavengers (Su):** the Heresa-Bedu can command any scavenging creatures within 100ft. Animals are entitled a Will save (DC15) to resist. The command lasts for one hour. Whether or not the save is successful, the creatures cannot be controlled by the same Heresa-Bedu for one day.

**Command Undead (Su):** the Heresa-Bedu can command undead as a priest of the same level, three times per day. Zombies created by his contagious bite are automatically controlled, while zombies created by another Heresa-Bedu must be controlled by this power.

**Dominate Werevulture (Su):** any normal, true or afflicted werevultures (but not werevulture

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priests) within 100ft, of the Heresa-Bedu must succeed at a Will save (DC13) or fall under the creature's sway as if affected by a Charm Monster spell cast by a 10th-level cleric. If the werevulture makes the save, it is immune to that particular Heresa-Bedu's power for a day.

**Feats:** Heresa-Bedu receive the Still Spell feat for free. Spells prepared with this feat can be cast while the creature flies.

**Vulnerabilities (Ex):** as with werevultures, edged weapons made of flint stone can overcome the Heresa-Bedu's damage reduction. High-quality flint is quite rare, though, being found only in small rocky veins in certain canyons. The stone is considered sacred by Pumasoncs and only they are used to make weapons with them.

**Skills:** Heresa-Bedu receive a racial bonus of +4 to Spot checks in dusk hours and under similar illumination.

## Kuni-Bina

These are natural spirits, mischievous Fey creatures that are naturally ethereal (invisible and incorporeal) but can manifest once per month in the shape of animals, people or monsters within 50 yards that they have clearly seen at least once. They have an innate Detect Thoughts ability (in their natural, ethereal form only) that helps them better imitate intelligent creatures.

As they have no other form of manifestation in a "true form" of their own, for game purposes the "Kuni-Bina" is a template, that can be added to any normal or dire animal, beast, magical beast, humanoid or monstrous humanoid found in Tsuu-Y-Teke, which is from now on called "base creature".

**Hit Dice:** as base creature +1 (no addition in class levels, if any)

**Speed:** as base creature.

**AC:** as base creature.

**Attacks:** as base creature, sometimes modified according to the new Hit Dice.

**Damage:** increased by one die type, as follows:

Old Damage	New Damage
1d2	1d3
1d3	1d4
1d4	1d6
1d6	1d8
1d8 or 1d10	2d6
1d12	2d8

**Special Attacks:** as base creature, but the Kuni-Bina cannot cast spells or use any supernatural or spell-like abilities of the base creature. Because of this hindrance the spirit prefers animals, dire animals and humans without any special abilities.

**Special Qualities:** as base creature, except for supernatural or spell-like abilities. The Kuni-Bina also has the Blindsight and Scent qualities.

**Saves:** as base creature, adjusted for the added Hit Dice.

**Abilities:** as base creature, but Intelligence is at least 11 and Charisma is at least 8.

**Skills:** as base creature, adjusted for Intelligence and added Hit Dice. Learned skills (those that need training and practice) cannot be emulated.

**Feats:** as base creature, adjusted for increased Hit Dice.

**Climate/Terrain:** as base creature.

**Organization:** Solitary.

**Challenge Rating:** as base creature +1

**Treasure:** none.

**Alignment:** always neutral evil.

**Advancement:** –

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## Lycanthrope, Werepuma

The werepuma is a creature blessed by Haloe-Tsuu, the Sun Puma and seen as a natural, living link between men and divinity. It resembles the wereleopard in many ways, except that the werepuma normally is a noble creature, devoted to the preservation of life and natural balance.

The rules for creating a werepuma are the same for all lycanthropes, and will not be reproduced here. Most afflicted werepumas have the animal form as secondary. Werepumas can speak Inan in hybrid form (with a purring accent) but not in animal form.

### Special Attacks

In addition to the base creature's attacks, the werepuma has the following special attacks:

**Curse of Lycanthropy (Su):** bite, Fortitude save DC18. A humanoid afflicted with lycanthropy assume the secondary form the next sunrise. Werepumas can remain indefinitely in puma form, but automatically revert to humanoid form during the True Night, unless they have ways to control their change. Unlike most lycanthropes, they do retain their intelligence in both hybrid and puma form, but are unable to speak as animals.

**Improved Grab (Ex):** to use this ability, the werepuma must hit with its bite attack. If it gets a hold, it can rake.

**Pounce (Ex):** if a werepuma leaps upon a foe during the first round of combat, it can make a full attack even if it has already taken a move action.

**Rake (Ex):** a werepuma that gets a hold can make two rake attacks at its highest attack bonus, for (1d3+Str bonus)hp damage each. If the werepuma pounces on an opponent, it can also rake.

**Spells:** if a werepuma is also a Pumasone and gets the Silent Spell and Still Spell, it can

prepare spells with these two feats (at normal level cost) to cast while in puma form.

**Turning Roar (Su):** Those werepumas who are also Pumasones receive as a granted power the Turning Roar, the ability to turn undead with a roar while in puma form.

### Special Qualities

**Chemical Bane (Ex):** nightshade, a particularly rare plant in a sunny land like Tsuu-Y-Teke. However, minions of the Vulture King do their best to grow this plant in shadowed areas inside the canyons.

**Phobia of Darkness (Ex):** being creatures born and raised under near-eternal daylight, Inan werepumas are especially afraid of the dark. When the sun sets and the True Night begins once a month, all werepumas (including true ones) immediately turn back to humanoid form. A Control Shape check (DC20) is required to return to animal or hybrid form until the sun rises again.

The sample werepuma described below is a 1st-level commoner and has the following ability scores in humanoid form: Str 11, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10. The sample human has Craft or Profession (any one) +6, Knowledge (any one) +4 as his only skills but, as with some other lycanthropes, also has a racial bonus of +4 to Climb, Hide, Listen, Move silently, Search and Spot (the bonus to Listen, Search and Spot increases to +8 in animal or hybrid form), and a +8 racial bonus to Balance. Afflicted werepumas can also learn the Control Shape skill (Monstrous Manual page 218 sidebar) as a class skill.

The ability modifiers for the werepuma are: Str +6, Dex +8, Con +4, Wis +4 in puma or hybrid form.



# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## Werepuma (sample)

### Medium-size Shapechanger

**Hit Dice** 3d8+6 (19hp)

**Initiative:** +0, +4 (Dex) as puma or hybrid

**AC:** 12 (+2 natural), 17 (+4 Dex, +3 natural) as puma or hybrid

**Speed:** 30ft.; 40ft., Climb 20ft. as puma or hybrid

**Attacks:** by weapon or unarmed strike +0; by weapon +6 as hybrid or bite +6 melee, 2 claws +1 melee as puma or hybrid

**Damage:** unarmed strike 1d3 subdual or by weapon; by weapon +3 as hybrid, or bite 1d6+3 claw 1d3+1 as puma or hybrid

**Face/Reach:** 5ft. by 5ft./5ft.

**Special Attacks:** curse of lycanthropy, pounce, improved grab, rake 1d3+3 as puma or hybrid

**Special Qualities:** alternate form, chemical bane (nightshade), DR15/obsidian, phobia of darkness, puma empathy, scent (as puma or hybrid)

**Saves:** Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +4

**Abilities:** Str 17, Dex 19, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 10

**Skills:** Balance +14, Climb +11, Hide +8, Listen +10, Move silently +8, Search +8, Spot +10, Wilderness Lore +8 as puma or hybrid

**Feats:** Weapon Finesse (bite, claw)

**Climate/Terrain:** any warm deserts, hills and mountains (Tsuu-Y-Teke)

**Organization:** solitary, pair or pride (5-10)

**Challenge Rating:** 4

**Treasure:** Standard, gems only

**Alignment:** Usually neutral good

**Advancement Range:** By character class

## Lycanthrope, Werevulture

These foul creatures were first created through the dark and mysterious powers of the Vulture King. They quietly spread their numbers among the lazy and selfish, and sometimes infect an innocent in order to blame him for their own dark deeds in a community, seeing to it that the victim suffers unjust punishment. Most such victims usually die, but some who are banished to the wilderness sometimes manage to survive, their bitterness against their former companions

pushing them forth, until they eventually end up in the deep caves controlled by Heresa Heri and embrace their dark fate as faithful servants. Exceptionally, the werevulture has two animal forms (common vulture and dire vulture) and no hybrid form, and cannot speak in animal form.

## Special Attacks

In addition to the base creature's normal attacks, the werevulture may have any one of the following attacks:

**Command Scavengers (Su):** identical to the Heresa-Bedu's ability of the same name, save that the range is 60ft. Will save DC (10 + 1/2 werevulture's HD + Charisma modifier).

**Contagious Bite (Ex):** similar to the Heresa-Bedu's contagious bite, but the disease is normal, not magical. Fortitude Save DC11, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d3 temporary Constitution. A werevulture with this attack cannot transmit lycanthropy.

**Frightful Screech (Su):** identical to the frightful moan ability described under the Ghost template in the Monster Manual, save that the werevulture unleashes a high-pitched screech rather than a moan. Will save DC (10 + 1/2 werevulture's HD + Charisma modifier).

## Special Qualities

**Chemical Bane (Ex):** sunflower, both if ingested or if its spores are inhaled. This plant is quite resistant to the heat, but grows only near the rivers, away from most pueblos.

The sample werevulture presented is a 1st-level commoner and has the following ability scores in humanoid form: Str 11, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10 The sample human has Craft or Profession (any one) +6, Knowledge (any one) +4 as his only skills but, as with some other lycanthropes, also has a racial bonus of +4 to Hide, Listen, Move silently, Search and Spot (the bonus to Listen, Search and Spot increases to +8 in animal or hybrid form), and a +8 racial bonus to Balance. Afflicted werevultures can also learn the Control

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Shape skill (Monstrous Manual page 218 sidebar) as a class skill.

The ability modifiers for the werevulture are: Dex +8, Con +6, Wis +2 as vulture, Str +6, Dex +2, Con +8, Wis +2 as dire vulture

## Werevulture (sample)

**Medium-size/Small/Large Shapechanger**

**Hit Dice** 4d8+16 (34hp)

**Initiative:** +0, +4 (Dex) as vulture, +2 (Dex) as dire vulture

**AC:** 12 (+2 natural), 18 (+1 size, +4 Dex, +3 natural) as vulture, 16 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +5 natural as dire vulture)

**Speed:** 30ft.; fly 40ft. (average) as vulture, fly 70ft. (average) as dire vulture

**Attacks:** by weapon or unarmed strike +0; 2 claws +7 melee, bite +2 melee as vulture, 2 claws +7 melee, bite +2 as dire vulture

**Damage:** unarmed strike 1d3 subdual or by weapon; claw 1d3, bite 1d4 as vulture, claw 1d6+3 bite 1d8+1 as dire vulture

**Face/Reach:** 5ft. by 5ft./5ft. (reach 10ft. as dire vulture)

**Special Attacks:** curse of lycanthropy as vulture or dire vulture

**Special Qualities:** alternate form, chemical bane (sunflower), DR15/flint, vulture empathy

**Saves:** Fort +10, Ref +8, Will +6

**Abilities:** Str 11, Dex 19, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 10 as vulture

Str 17, Dex 15, Con 19, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 10 as dire vulture

**Skills:** 6

Balance +10 (+12 as vulture), Bluff +7, Hide +8 (+10 as vulture), Listen +10, Move silently +8 (+10 as vulture), Search +9, Spot +10

**Feats:** Skill Focus (any) as human; Alertness, Weapon Finesse (bite, claw) as vulture

**Climate/Terrain:** any warm deserts, hills and mountains (Tsuu-Y-Teke)

**Organization:** solitary, pair or band (5-10)

**Challenge Rating:** 5

**Treasure:** Standard (gems only)

**Alignment:** Always neutral evil

**Advancement Range:** By character class

## The Inan Pantheon

### The Sun Puma

Haloe-Tsuu, the Sun Puma, commands the skies, after having taken rulership over the sun and stars from the Vulture King. His clerics, known as Pumasoncs (Hearts of the Puma), serve the communities as advisors and healers, being part of the village councils. They wear leather armor under their ceremonial woolen robes. Some of the most prominent are true werepumas and most of those in the higher ranks of the cult have been willingly afflicted, being widely known and respected by all communities.

Deity Alignment: Neutral Good (priests can be of any non-evil alignment)

Symbol: claw of puma.

Favored Weapon: shortspear (sometimes with carved flint edge)

Domains: Animal, Good, Healing, Sun.

### The Vulture King

Hidden in caves and dark recesses, the Ohoti Bedu (as these priests are known) subtly attract to their ranks the lazy and idle, those who do not want to work hard everyday but would take great pains to ensure their personal profit and comfort. Some are former rogues who were expelled and marked with a dishonoring tattoo. They wear leather armor under their ceremonial black woolen robes. The inner circle is composed exclusively of natural werevultures, the only ones allowed to see the Vulture King.

Deity Alignment: Neutral Evil (priests can be of any evil alignment)

Symbol: white vulture feather.

Favored Weapon: stone dagger (obsidian or any stone except flint)

Domains: Animal, Death, Earth, Evil.



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## Personalities of Note

### Idianakatu

**Male Afflicted Werepuma 12<sup>th</sup>-level Pumasone**

**Medium-sized Shapechanger (5'10")**

**HD** 12d8+36 (90hp)

**Initiative:** +3 (Dex), +7 (Dex) as puma

**AC:** 17 (+3 Dex, +2 leather armor, +2 natural), 20 (+7 Dex, +3 natural) as puma

**Speed:** 30ft.; 40ft., Climb 20ft. as puma

**Attacks:** +10/+5 (+2 flint shortspear); bite +16 melee, 2 claws +11 melee as puma

**Damage:** 1d6+1 (+2 flint shortspear), or bite 1d6+3 claw 1d3+1 as puma

**Face/Reach:** 5ft. by 5ft./5ft.

**Special Attacks:** curse of lycanthropy, pounce, improved grab, spells, turn undead, rake 1d3+3, turning roar as puma

**Special Qualities:** alternate form, chemical bane (nightshade), DR15/obsidian, phobia of darkness, puma empathy, scent (as puma)

**Saves:** Fort +15, Ref +11, Will +17

**Abilities:** Str 10, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 17, Wis 20, Cha 16 (Str 16, Dex 24, Con 20, Wis 24 in animal form).

**Skills:** Balance +12, Climb +13, Concentration +10, Control Shape +10, Craft (leatherworking) +8, Craft (tattooing) +8, Diplomacy +8, Heal +10, Hide +14, Knowledge (Local) +7, Knowledge (Monster Lore) +8, Knowledge (Nature) +6, Knowledge (Religion) +5, Listen +20, Move silently +18, Profession (Herbalist) +10, Scry +8, Search +16, Spellcraft +8, Spot +20, Wilderness Lore +12\*.

**Feats:** Alertness, Dodge, Expertise, Improved Trip, Silent Spell, Still Spell, Weapon Finesse (bite, claw) as puma

**Climate/Terrain:** any warm deserts, hills and mountains (Tsuu-Y-Teke)

**Challenge Rating:** 14

**Treasure:** Standard, no coins

**Alignment:** Lawful Good

**Signature Equipment:** +2 holy flint shortspear

\*Idianakatu's description and background can be found in the *Book of Shadows*.

**Spells:** (save DC17 + spell level)  
6/7+1/6+1/6+1/4+1/4+1/3+1

Idianakatu can prepare spells with the Silent Spell and Still Spell feats in order to cast them while in puma form.

Spell Domains: Animal (Animal Friendship 1/day, Knowledge [nature] is a class skill), Sun (greater turning 1/day, destroys all undead that would be turned in that attempt)

**Turning Roar (Su):** Idianakatu can attempt to turn undead in puma form, as many times per day as he has turning attempts (6/day).

**Skills:** Idianakatu receives a +4 racial bonus to Wilderness Lore checks when tracking by scent in animal form.

### Alobederi

**Male Afflicted Werevulture 5<sup>th</sup>-level Rogue/9<sup>th</sup>-level Ohoti Bedu**

**Medium-sized Shapechanger (5'10")**

**HD** 5d6+15 + 9d8+27 (100hp)

**Initiative:** +4 (Dex), +8 (Dex) as vulture, +5 (Dex) as dire vulture

**AC:** 16 (+4 Dex, +2 natural), 22 (+1 size, +8 Dex, +3 natural) as vulture, 19 (–1 size, +5 Dex, +5 natural as dire vulture)

**Speed:** 30ft.; fly 40ft. (average) as vulture, fly 70ft. (average) as dire vulture

**Attacks:** +11/+6 (+1 obsidian dagger); 2 claws +10 melee, bite +5 melee as vulture, 2 claws +12 melee, bite +7 as dire vulture

**Damage:** 1d4+2 (+1 obsidian dagger); claw 1d3+1, bite 1d4 as vulture, claw 1d6+4 bite 1d8+2 as dire vulture

**Face/Reach:** 5ft. by 5ft./5ft. (reach 10ft. as dire vulture)

**Special Attacks:** command undead, curse of lycanthropy as vulture or dire vulture, frightful screech, sneak attack +3d6, spells

**Special Qualities:** alternate form, chemical bane (sunflower), DR15/flint, evasion, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC), vulture empathy

**Saves:** Fort +16, Ref +15, Will +14

**Abilities:** Str 12, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 18, Cha 16 (Dex 26, Con 22, Wis 20, as vulture; Str 18, Dex 20, Con 24, Wis 20 in dire vulture form).

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**Skills:** Balance +21, Bluff +8, Climb +9, Concentration +12, Control Shape +10, Decipher Script +7, Diplomacy +10, Disable Device +7, Disguise +10, Escape Artist +13, Gather Information +8, Heal +10, Hide +17, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (Local) +7, Knowledge (Religion) +7, Jump +9, Listen +20, Move Silently +13, Read Lips +7, Scry +7, Search +18, Sense Motive +10, Spellcraft +7, Spot +20, Tumble +13, Use Rope +13, Use Magic Device +8, Wilderness Lore +5

**Feats:** Alertness, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Silent Spell, Still Spell, Weapon Finesse (bite, claw) as vulture

**Climate/Terrain:** any warm deserts, hills and mountains (Tsuu-Y-Teke)

**Challenge Rating:** 16

**Treasure:** Standard (no coins)

**Alignment:** Neutral Evil

**Signature Equipment:** +1 obsidian dagger

\*Alobederi's description and background can be found in the *Book of Shadows*.

**Spells:** (Save DC 15 + spell level)  
6/6+1/5+1/4+1/ 3+1/2+1

Alobederi can prepare spells with the Silent Spell and Still Spell feats and cast them in vulture or dire vulture form.

**Spell Domains:** Death (death touch 1/day, 9d6 damage), Earth (turn or destroy air creatures as a good cleric turns undead; command or rebuke earth creatures as evil cleric commands undead, 6/day)

**Frightful Screech (Su):** in vulture or dire vultures form only, affects all within 30ft., Will save DC20 or become panicked for 2d4 rounds.

## Heresa Heri, The Vulture King Darklord of Tsuu-Y-Teke

**Male Dire Vulture Rank Five Ancient Dead 18<sup>th</sup>-level Ohoti Bedu**

**Large Undead (12')**

**HD** 18d12+3 (120hp)

**Initiative:** +4 (Dex)

**Speed:** 30ft., fly 90ft. (average)

**AC** 30 (–1 size, +4 Dex, +17 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 26

**Attacks:** 2 claws +24 melee, bite +22 melee

**Damage:** Claw 1d8+11, bite 2d4+5

**Face/Reach:** 5ft. by 5ft./10ft.

**Special Attacks:** Command scavengers, command undead, contagious bite, curse, fear, frightful screech, spells, werevulture dominion, undead

**Special Qualities:** DR20/+3, SR16, immunities, rejuvenation, cold resistance 20, elemental affinity (fire), resistant to blows, turn resistance +8, vulnerabilities

**Saves:** Fort +11, Ref +10, Will +21

**Abilities:** Str 32 Dex 19 Con – Int 18 Wis 30 Cha 28

**Skills:** Bluff +12, Climb +19, Concentration +20, Diplomacy +11, Hide +12, Intimidate +20, Knowledge (local) +9, Knowledge (religion) +9, Jump +11, Listen +20, Move Silently +12, Scry +10, Search +9, Sense Motive +10, Spellcraft +10, Spot +20, Wilderness Lore +10

**Feats:** Alertness, Combat Casting, Flyby Attack, Multiattack, Still Spell, Toughness

**Climate/Terrain:** any subterranean (Tsuu-Y-Teke)

**Organization:** Solitary.

**Challenge Rating:** 24

**Treasure:** Double standard.

**Alignment:** Chaotic Evil

\*Heresa Heri's description and background can be found in the *Book of Shadows*.

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**Cleric spells per day:** (save DC 18+ spell level)  
6/8+1/7+1/7+1/7+1/6+1/5+1/4+1/3+1/2+1

**Spell Domains:** Death, Earth, Fire (\*).

\* Heresa Heri has access to spells of the divine domain of Fire due to its elemental affinity special ability. No other priest of the Vulture King has access to the Fire domain.

**Command Scavengers (Su):** Heresa Heri can summon grave scarabs, black scorpions, hairy spiders, once per day each type. It can also command vultures as an evil cleric commands undead, 12/day.

**Contagious Bite (Su):** bite, Fortitude save (DC 26); incubation 1 day. Temporary damage 1d3 Strength and Constitution per day until cured or dead. It cannot be cured without magic. Victims killed by this attack rise as desert zombies under their creator's control at the end of 3 days.

**Curse (Su):** once per week, Heresa Heri can curse a single individual with werenvulture lycanthropy. The victim may try to resist the curse with a Fortitude save (DC30).

**Fear (Su):** anyone who sees Heresa Heri and fails a Will save (DC24) is paralyzed with fear for 20 rounds. Whether the target succeeds or not, the Vulture King cannot use this power on the same target for a day.

**Frightful Screech (Su):** affects all creatures within 30ft., Will save (DC24) or become panicked for 2d4 rounds.

**Werenvulture Dominion (Su):** any werenvulture within 300ft. of the Vulture King must succeed at a Will save (DC26) or fall under its complete control for a full day. Most werenvultures do not even try to resist.

**Resistant to Blows (Ex):** the Vulture King tough skin and soft feathers absorb half of any damage suffered from physical blows, before damage reduction applies.

**Immunities (Ex):** Heresa Heri is immune to fire- and earth-based attacks.

**Rejuvenation (Su):** 1 hour of rest, 2hp/minute, even if destroyed. Needs no rest afterwards.

**Vulnerabilities (Ex):** lightning-based attacks cause double damage. Holy water made by a priest of the Sun Puma causes 2d4 points of damage per vial, 2 points per splash. Holy or *blessed* weapons overcome damage reduction as if enchanted.

**Undead:** immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.



## Places...

Mythica Nephos

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## CALLISTA WATER, WATER, EVERYWHERE

By: Carrie Kube  
(Yaoi Huntress Earth)

The flooded home of the  
true Vistani.

### The Land

Callista is a group of tiny islets that were once a much larger island. The domain has suffered a severe flooding and land has now become a scarce commodity. The people travel on small boats called *vargos* and live in buildings with the floors stacked upon each other.

Due to the massive flooding, they have only three crops that they can grow (sugar cane, rice, and cranberries) and rely heavily on trade. Luckily, the domain is located somewhere near the Core and has already made several successful trade routes.

### Land-Based Powers

All golems crafted into female humanoid form are able to pass off as normal persons with little effort, no matter how crude they look. Golems crafted as male humanoids become protective of all women and will fly into a rage if he sees one get hurt.

All vampires are immune to running water. The males have a tendency to fall in love with the first young maiden (any human / humanoid) they lay their eyes on; something that could lead to a rise in the dhampir population.

All fiends can *teleport* via any body of water in the domain.

### Locations of Note

The apartments are a sight in their own right, but the most splendid location of all is the beautifully constructed Cathedral of the Goddess, Callista's sole functioning church.

**Cultural Level:** Renaissance (8).

### The Folk

The citizens of Callista are a curious lot. They claim to be Vistani, yet they don't dress like Vistani nor do they share the same amount of wanderlust. Dark-haired, dark-eyed and with olive skin, the Callistans are fortunate to have a place to call home even if it is flooded, and are in constant civil war with the paka of the domain. Since they have a home, they can easily settle their wanderlust with the trade routes they have with the other domains. The people wear clothes closer to that of the people in the domains of the same cultural level, but they have been known to wear a good amount of gold jewelry and body piercings.

According to the Callistans, the "false Vistani (they who travel on land)" had angered their goddess and were sent to Ravenloft as punishment. They believe that these false Vistani had made some cruel pact to send them to the Domains of Dread and resent them for it. It is not sure what this exact incident was, but the bitter feelings from generation to generation remain. They have mixed feelings toward half-Vistani and unless the half-breed is female, it will be hard to gain the natives' trust.

There are a few things that the Callistans share with their hated counterparts: their nighttime ceremonies. Standing on their porches, windowsills, roofs, or on their *vargos*, they perform their music and dance inside their homes as the notes blare across the sky. The Callistans also share the Vistani's love for animal training (otters and other aquatic

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animals,) medicine making, and metal smiting. Hence why trade is so important to the natives so they can support themselves and their interests.

Unfortunately, the natives also share the Vistani's difficulty having children. There is a 20% chance that any of their children will be a girl; making it difficult to keep the population going. Women are a very valuable resource and are treated with utmost care and protection. The very idea of a man who would beat or rape a woman is the most disgusting creature of all in the eyes of the populace. It is not unusual to see a woman with more than one husband. They believe it allows more than one family to share their genes.

Little does anyone know, the Callistans are nothing more than the reincarnated souls of dead Vistani. Wishing to toy with their own creations, the Dark powers took their souls and made a domain for them. Any land-roving Vistani has a 5% chance of recognizing a reincarnated soul. Rafe is the only one who knows about this and uses the natives' pride as propaganda to fit his own ends.

As for the dreaded Moon Madness, the Callistans also are victim to it and suffer the same way a half-Vistani would. Their primary language is *Patterna*.

On the other side of the spectrum are the Paka. These creatures believe that Callista was once the holy grounds of their god and are repulsed that it has been turned into a town. Thus, a protection racket is desperately needed.

## Personalities of note

Recently, another person has taken interest in this protection racket. Andrea Vahdar, a widow of a merchant, grew jealous of the domain lord's money and power and has now set up a small but growing group of her own.

The second group of personalities is the identical triplet priestesses of the Cathedral of

the Goddess. These priestesses manage the services and funeral rites. Three minds thinking as one, their voices seem to echo off each other as they speak.

## Native player characters

Callistans can have any class and receive a +2 bonus on Swim and Profession: Boat Handling skill checks. All male PCs will be very protective of any females in the group and will never hesitate to push in their chairs or open doors for them. On the downside, they will try not to hurt any women (even if they are evil) unless it cannot be avoided. If they have to, they will apologize before striking or only use magic that will stun or put them to sleep.

It is possible to have a female PC, but unless one manages to earn the respect of the girl's caretakers, they will demand that a man come with her. (This is a good way to introduce two new players to a game.) Female PCs usually take less combative classes in hopes of not getting hurt.

All clerics and paladins worship the Callistan Vistani goddess (Neutral in alignment) and can choose from the domains of Travel, Knowledge, and Magic.

## Encounters

The Paka are the most common threat, but one also has to watch out for the occasional sea-dwelling monster. It is said that the ghosts of the people Rafe brought to corruption haunt the area, seeking retribution or revenge on him.

## The Lord

Some children are blessed by the gods with extra strength, beauty, power, and charm. Rafe was one such child. Though Ravenloft fans will recognize him from the *Children of the Night: Ghosts* accessory, our future darklord was actually born in Nova Vaasa. Though born a half-Vistani, his skin tone was a lot lighter, which allowed him pass off as normal citizen. Rafe's charm made him the toast of the Nova



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Vaasan elite and no one was ever the wiser of his mixed heritage. But he was still human and susceptible to corruption. Eventually Rafe grew proud and egotistical, believing that he was invincible with his silver tongue and good looks.

Traveling the realms, he would swindle innocent women in marriage scams, start feuds between noble families, and lead others to his own level of corruption. Within time, he caught the notice of the Dark Powers. Rafe pretended that it didn't bother him as he continued his little manipulations, but the Mists would not leave him alone.

Rafe's methods of manipulation became even more cruel and lethal. If the Dark Powers were going to punish him even further, he would drag as many people as he could with him. But, his plan would've been successful if it weren't for a group of adventurers that caught on to his little scheme (see *CoTN:G*). The chase thrilled him to no end as he managed to stay a step ahead of his pursuers, leaving a fresh corpse to infuriate them. Eventually, he grew tired of this game and put an end to it by setting fire to an inn they were staying at. As he laughed at their misery, he failed to notice the Mists taking him away.

## Rafe Ungard Darklord of Callista

**Half-Vistani Brd10:** AL CE; HD 10d8; hp 48; AC 12 (+2 leather armor); Init +0; Atk +9/+4 melee, +7/+2 ranged; Save Fort +4, Ref +7, Wil +9; Str 14, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 20.

*Skills & Feats:* Appraise +6, Balance +2, Bluff +11, Concentration +5, Decipher Script +7, Diplomacy +11, Disguise +9, Escape Artist +2, Gather Information +11, Hide +4, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (Dark Powers) +6, Knowledge (Ravenloft Core) +7, Listen +4, Move Silently +2, Perform (singing, violin, dancing) +13, Ride +3, Scry +6, Sense Motive +8, Use Magic Device +9; Alertness, Weapon Proficiency (rapier), Run, Quick Draw.

*Spells:* (6/4/4/4/2) 0-Daze, Mage Hand, Prestidigitation, Flare, Ghost Sound, Read Magic; 1st-Cause Fear, Expeditious Retreat, Hypnotism, Sleep; 2nd-Blindness/Deafness, Detect Thoughts, Tongues, Sound Burst; 3rd-Dispel Magic, Charm Monster, Emotion, Magic Circle Against Good; 4th-Legend Lore, Locate Creature.

Arcane Spell Failure: 10%

*Weapons used:* Rapier, Light Crossbow (10 bolts). Languages: Balok, Darkonese, Mordentish, Patterna. Bardic Music: Inspire Fear, Countersong, Fascinate, Inspire Incompetence.

## Current Sketch

Since arriving in Callista, Rafe has been able to use the civil war between the natives and the paka to his advantage by creating a "protection" racket. Though it is nothing more than some sort of a mafia ring, Rafe is virtually untouchable due to his ability to manipulate the laws of the domain as well as his own talents.

## Curse

Rafe's life is a constant game of Russian roulette. The Dark Powers decided to play a little game where one of the injuries/attacks on him will succeed in killing him. This can range from having his head cut-off by a fighter's sword to something as simple as falling down a flight of stairs and snapping his neck. He revives in perfect health the next day, but until he does so, Rafe is plagued with horrifying images of the fiery afterlife that awaits him.

Oddly, no one in the domain seems to notice this curse, and if they do witness it, they forget about it by the next day. Rafe has to roll for a Horror check every time he awakes from these afterlife visions.

## Personality

Rafe finds a great love in his dirty dealings, because it allows him to prove how

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much smarter and craftier he is than anyone else. He is always a step ahead of his enemies and believes that he is superior to all that are around him. On the other hand, Rafe has become greatly paranoid and even though he's a master at hiding it, one can easily notice the little rituals he performs in hopes of avoiding death.

## Closing the borders

If Rafe wishes to close the borders, 50-foot geysers of boiling water will shoot up from the water. If anyone tries to cross, the heat from the water will scald their flesh off and kill them. People using the fly spell manage to get over until the geysers raise and hit the caster right as they're at the top.

## Confronting Rafe

Rafe is not afraid to fight his own battles, but he usually sends his men to take care of any threats. With help from his bardic magic and his men, he can hopefully weaken the enemy enough to take them on with his sword.

## New Feat: Protect the Girls

You value the life of a woman more than your own, and this manifests through your protective actions. Benefit: If the PC is about 10 ft from any woman, he chooses to protect her as a free action, and when someone attacks her, the character will throw themselves at any ranged blow directed at the woman and take the damage. This lasts until one of them moves out of the ten-foot range or the PC calls off the feat (also a free action.)

Special: This feat that is automatically given to all male characters native to Callista, but can be bought by other PCs/NPCs.



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## HIBERNATE A HEAPING DOSE OF DEBAUCHERY

By: DarkSoldier

### Editor's Note

This domain is the update of an article that was published in the USS 2001. The article deals with prostitution and drugs, so once more a mature audience is suggested for that submission. ☺

Hibernate is a relatively modern place, with victorian morality on surface. But, of course, all is not like it seems to be ...

### Landscape

Full Ecology (Temperate Forests and Hills). Hibernate (HY-bur-NAYT) is a small island about the size of Dominia and sitting between the islands of Demise and Markovia, in the frigid Sea of Sorrows. Tall forests dominate most of the island, though much has been cut away to use for farmland and human settlements. The deforested areas are dominated by rolling hills and flatlands, upon which grows the crops that feed the people. Rivers and streams cascade down from the low mountains near the north of the island, creating a series of waterways that both help and hinder travel in the domain. The city of Stratford lies at the mouth of the River Smythe, and a manor house overlooks the city and its river from a low-rising cliff. The people know it as Cole Manor, and few willingly go near it, fearful of the unknown horrors within.

There are two basic architectural styles in this land, divided along the same lines as the folk. The nobles enjoy massive mansions on

equally expansive properties, each built to the family's whims. The peasants live in squalor, crowding into two-room, one-floor dwellings with virtually no amenities beyond a fire pit against one wall.

Only the spring and autumn months are bearable in Hibernate; summer brings only sweltering heat and swarms of biting insects, and winter freezes the ports and the rivers, and kills most of the crops. Many deaths from starvation and exposure are recorded every year in Hibernate.

Cultural Level: Renaissance (9)

### Major Settlements

Donovanshire (pop. 1,100), Lutuk (pop. 950), Stratford (pop. 4,000).

### The Folk

Population - 7,000; Humans 98%, Other 2%; Languages - Hibernatian, Darkonese. Religions - God.

Hibernatians fall into two groups: aristocracy and peasantry. The nobles, as they like to be called, are all of fine breeding and education. Their fine, opulent (some would say gaudy) dress, and fine physical features distinguish them from the masses; their hair is always pale blond to mid-brown, and styled to whatever is in at the moment. They own all the land and flaunt their wealth at every opportunity. As well, they are incredibly uptight regarding decency: both men and women take great pains to conceal every inch of skin from the neck down.

The peasants are the workers, raising crops and livestock on the aristocrats' land, and making the goods that they know they cannot

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afford. The peasants in Lutuk enjoy a marginally better life than their Stratford counterparts, but instead of constant oppression, they have constant farm labor, interrupted by occasional oppression when food is shipped to Stratford. Although some have the fair hair of the nobility, the dominant hair color is dark brown, and their bodies tell of harsh lives, either on the farm or on the street. Some feel pushed far enough to sell themselves for enough money to get their next meals.

All inhabitants of Hiberate revere a deity they only refer to as "God." They do not know who or what God is, nor do they know its name; the church tells them that to know the true name of God is to provoke his wrath, and all who sin against God will be punished swiftly. The church has outlawed countless practices, including the consumption of hard liquors, marriage with anyone outside their faith, and pre-marital relations, claiming them to be contrary to the religion's tenets. Their patriarchy considers women second-class citizens, and forbids them to obtain positions outside the home or to own land in their own name.

## The Law

Republic (aristocratic/theocratic oligarchy). A dozen aristocratic families enforce their will upon the masses through a small puppet government of male landowners, although the church wields great influence in this organization. With a shrill cry, any noble can summon the Bobbies (a local slang term for the police force). Robert Haight, for whom the Bobbies received their name, leads the force from their station in the heart of downtown Stratford.

The church is the true government in Hiberate, and the Pontiff, Donovan Lindor, is the infallible word of God. Most, if not all of Hiberate's laws are derived from the holy book, and the church relentlessly pursues sinners to punish them in a variety of methods derived from old execution methods. This government is as corrupt as any other, and Lindor himself is

reported to have violated his own laws by frequently indulging in gambling, drinking, and women, often simultaneously.

Underneath the polished aristocracy, and even below the haggard peasantry, there lies a heavy criminal element. In the back alleys and black markets, anything and everything is for sale: food, drugs, goods, and even sex. Everything the church bans is readily available in these black markets, which can pack up and leave in a moment's notice, usually when church inquisitors or Bobbies get too close for comfort. There is also a large, thriving organized prostitution ring in Stratford, run by a marble beauty known as Elizabeth. Any noble with the money can have one of her girls "entertain" for a night, though Elizabeth herself commands outrageous prices.

Slavery is officially outlawed, but many nobles employ "indentured servants," who earn at most a few pence each day of demeaning, back-breaking labor. They often bear hideous bruises and scars, which their noble masters give them as "reminders" not to go against their word. The church would normally punish these nobles, but their generous "donations" to the church have given them the opportunity to look the other way while this practice continues.

## Trade & Diplomacy

Resources - coal, iron, potatoes, wheat, wildlife, wood. Coinage - pound (gp), shilling (sp), pence (cp).

Property is what the people of Hiberate believe determines wealth and status. The majority of trade in the domain is between settlements, although some resources are shipped to Lamordia and elsewhere in the Core. The church has two policies regarding trade between Hiberate and any other land: they will not associate with heretics (meaning anyone who does not venerate their God in the exact same way), and they will send missionaries to convert the populace of other lands.

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Unfortunately, the majority of these priests fail, and many have been killed at the hands of those they were attempting to convert. Hibernate is equipped with a mediocre standing army and navy, which would be unable to mount an attack on any other land, even the uninhabited Markovia.

The black markets have all sorts of contraband and stolen goods; the prices range from 45% to 250% the list price in the sourcebooks. Of course, it's all but impossible to predict where these fly-by-night back-alley shops will appear next.

## Characters

Classes - bards, fighters, rogues, sorcerers. Skills - Bluff, Craft (woodwork), Forgery, Gather Information, Innuendo, Knowledge (religion), Profession (farmer), Sense Motive. Feats - Exotic Weapon Proficiency (firearms), Iron Will, Skill Focus (Knowledge [religion]), Weapon Focus (pistol).

## Darklord of Hibernate

### Elizabeth

**Female human eminent vampire** Ari14: CR 18; ECL 19; Medium-size Undead (5 ft. 9 in. tall); HD 14d12; hp 101; Init +9; Spd 50 ft; AC 23 (+5 Dex, +8 natural); Melee +15 slam (1d6+5 plus energy drain/crit x2); SA animate dead, blood drain, children of the night, create spawn, domination, energy drain; SQ alternate form, cold & electricity resistance 20, damage reduction 25/+3, fast healing 8, gaseous form, spider climb, turn resistance +7, undead, vampire weaknesses; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +13; Str 21, Dex 21, Con -, Int 17, Wis 17, Cha 21.

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +20 (5), Diplomacy +12 (5), Disguise +16 (9), Gather Information +13 (8), Hide +15 (2), Intimidate +14 (9), Knowledge (history) +12 (9), Knowledge (nobility & royalty) +12 (9), Knowledge (religion) +4 (1), Listen +11 (2), Move Silently +12 (1), Perform (ballad, dance, harp) +8 (3), Search +12 (1), Sense Motive +12 (1), Spot +12 (1); Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Expertise, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Leadership (19), Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Bluff), Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Skill Focus (Disguise).

*Languages:* Hibernatian, Darkonese.

*Possessions:* Elizabeth is not known to possess any significant items, but her habit of stealing from her clients means she could have minor magical baubles.

Elizabeth is a stunningly beautiful woman, apparently between the ages of 20 and 30. She stopped aging when she became a vampire over 500 years before. She is tall for a woman, with long hair cascading down her back, as black as her skin is white. She also colors her lips and nails black. It seems only her eyes aren't black or white; they are a dull red, but they become bright crimson after feeding. She can disguise her fangs as slightly enlarged canines, but they extend to 3/4 inch when she bites.

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She garbs herself in exotic black silks and satins, far more opulent than most of the Hibernatian aristocrats possess, and far more revealing than what the Hibernatians consider indecent. She adorns herself with several small pieces of jewelry, and surrounds herself with only the finest decor, though it all contains a motif of death and suffering.



**Background:** Elizabeth Michelle Cole III was born into an aristocratic family on an outlander world. Her church-funded tutors taught her to treat the common people like dirt, to avoid them as if they carried a deadly plague. However, she secretly began a relationship with a farmhand on her parents' land, not out of love, but just to shock her parents. Arthur and Marianne Cole found out about this, and had the peasant man arrested and executed by beheading. They forced Elizabeth to watch, trying to get her to understand that peasants were good for nothing

except working for the upper class. She already knew they couldn't do anything for her, so she simply turned and left the scene.

Over the years, Elizabeth grew to hate everyone around her. In the land's customs, women were not permitted to own land, and were not considered worthy of inheriting a family's lineage unless she married. In fact, women had no appreciable rights whatsoever. Her parents wanted her to marry a pompous spoiled brat from the region, but she immediately despised the shallow and callous man as soon as she saw him. Arthur refused to reconsider his decision, which he came to without Elizabeth's knowledge or consent. Marianne merely shied away from the situation, as Arthur had a habit of beating her if she disagreed with him. Elizabeth could see the plight of women in her land, and she knew that nothing would ever happen to change that in a male-dominated society. Still, being the kind of person to buck tradition, Elizabeth brewed a plot to keep the Coles' holdings out of her cousins' greedy hands, and under her absolute control. She didn't need a shallow, weak-willed husband twice her age to manipulate; she could do it all herself.

Several years later, Elizabeth packed her things and left, telling her parents that she was going on a trip for "a while." When she made it to another country, a flamboyant, yet angst-ridden bard enthralled her. The bard, too, found something about the noblewoman, and they fell in love. Elizabeth did not know of his dark secret until they lay together one night, when he revealed he was an "upuir." As he sank his fangs into her neck, she understood he meant "vampire."

Elizabeth returned to her family after a seven-year absence. Although her skin had become pale as alabaster and her hair was dark as night, they still welcomed her. When her father embraced her, she bit into his neck, sucking him dry of blood. Before her mother could scream for her servants, Elizabeth was on her, and she made both of her parents into vampire spawn under her control. She turned



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every person in the mansion into spawn and openly defied tradition by directly and brutally controlling the family's holdings for ten years, until she heard the call of a vile deity, The Unspeakable One, and disappeared.

Five hundred years passed, and Elizabeth slowly grew stronger and stronger. Her infernal patron dispatched her to find "the Son of the Black Moon" and turn him to the side of darkness. She did so with zeal, especially after finding out that he was a handsome young man.

Alas, the Son, Kerad Dylf, would not turn to evil, no matter how hard Elizabeth tried. Even outright threats wouldn't sway his decisions. When Kerad killed himself, the vampiress manipulated an unwitting servant of her dark lord into resurrecting him, still with the intent of turning him to evil. Frustrated that he would shun her for a half-elf commoner, Elizabeth again forced events, putting the girl between Kerad and his archenemy. She had to kill her personally, but that mattered little to Elizabeth, as long as she could have Kerad all to herself."

Or so she thought. Grief-stricken, Kerad still continued to refuse her advances, and threatened her very existence. She talked him into sparing her by offering him a way to bring his lover back to life. As they traveled through the night, a heavy fog descended upon them, and Elizabeth appeared out of the Misty Border in northern Darkon.

She unintentionally disrupted the plans of a Kargat cell, and they attempted to destroy her. Fleeing for her unlife, Elizabeth went to Lamordia, and then headlong into the Sea of Sorrows, where an island beckoned to her, the island of Hibernata. Although she laughed at the "inept" Darkon secret police, she quickly regretted her decision to choose that particular island to run to.

**Current Sketch:** Frustrated that Kerad and his vitality are always beyond her reach, Elizabeth has set up an expansive prostitution ring, with her in the center and an assortment of girls at her

beck and call. All 20 are 1st level commoners, and they all look like their souls have been crushed and the life sucked out, because Elizabeth reinforces their loyalty through drug addiction; she has them hopelessly hooked on several wicked substances, the least of which is opium. She forces them to pay for their own addictions, leaving them with barely enough money to eat. She cares very little for them, seeing them only as a means to an end, but puts on a facade to make it seem as though she does. Elizabeth also has many more underlings throughout the city, gathering dirty secrets about her clients to use against them (her Leadership score of 19 allows her an additional 20 1st-level followers, 4 of 2nd level, 2 of 3rd level, and 1 each of 4th and 5th level).

Her "black book" contains the names of her regular clients; although almost anybody with the money can approach her girls, only the richest of the rich in Hibernata could even hope to be in the same room with her. Her regulars include the mayors of Stratford and Donovanshire, Police Chief Robert Haight, and even Pontiff Donovan Lindor himself. In fact, she is responsible for his failing health, having drained him enough to reduce his Constitution to 4. She has an endless supply of life force to feed upon, and effectively rules a small criminal empire, but she will never taste Kerad's intense spiritual strength.

When the occasional adventurer falls into her web, Elizabeth dominates him into searching for the Son of the Black Moon, and leading him back to Hibernata. To date, none of them have returned. Of course, she always waits for the next one to show up, and she repeats the process.

Elizabeth's love of death and decay has given her the abilities to create and control lesser undead. She uses it to populate her lair with undead bodyguards to throw at anybody foolish enough to enter without her permission.

**Combat:** Elizabeth did not spend 500 years twiddling her thumbs; although she has no formal combat training beyond aristocratic fencing and hunting, she can easily kill a fully-

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grown man with little more than a single blow. She knows that her vampiric powers will protect her from any conventional weapons, but she despises getting her hands dirty, having her girls or other minions defend her while she makes an escape, calling a pack of wolves to aid them in her defense if she can get away with it.

**Special Attacks:** Children of the Night (Su): Elizabeth can summon 4d8 dire rats, a swarm of 10d10 bats, or a pack of 3d6 wolves. Her summoned creatures will arrive in 2d6 rounds, and serve for 1 hour.

Animate Dead (Sp): Elizabeth can animate dead as a 14th-level sorcerer.

**Vampire Abilities:** The save DC for Elizabeth's vampire abilities is 22.

**Special Qualities:** Alternate Form (Su): Elizabeth can assume the form of a dire bat or dire wolf as a standard action. This ability is like polymorph self, cast by a 12th-level sorcerer. She can remain in either form until she assumes another or until the next sunrise.

**Vampire Weaknesses:** Elizabeth can tolerate one full hour of sunlight before she is destroyed, though she is utterly powerless while exposed and can only take partial actions. She can cross running water, although immersion is still potentially fatal. Garlic still repulses her, but mirrors do not disturb her, and holy symbols must be presented with conviction and faith (though she is immune to her domain's shallow faith). A stake through the heart will only paralyze her, unless it is made of solid pine (in that case, it is lethal).

**Undying Soul (Su):** Should Elizabeth ever be destroyed, her essence will inhabit one of her girls, whose body and personality she will usurp, and Elizabeth will be whole again in 1d6+1 days. If all of her girls are destroyed, Elizabeth's essence will find a random Hibernatian female and take over her body.

## The Lair

Although she uses it rarely, Cole Manor is an exact replica of the mansion she lived in as a mortal. If she perceives a real danger to herself, she will flee to its safety, protected by a horde of 10 zombies and 10 skeletons, all created from the bodies of the men she lured into the manor. Her perversion and the violent acts that she commits inside its confines have made it a rank 2 sinkhole of evil; it would be higher, but she does not frequent it.

## Closing the Borders

When she wishes, Elizabeth can completely surround the island with a thick fog. The fog will blind anyone attempting to travel through it, reducing visibility to a mere 20 feet. Dangerous shoals surround much of the island, and many shipwrecks lie beneath the waves. If the escapees do manage to survive the mile-thick fog, Hibernate lies before them.

## NPC's of Hibernate

### Robert Haight

Male human Ftr6: CR 6; ECL 6; Medium-size Humanoid (human) (5 ft. 9 in. tall); HD 6d10+3; hp 40; Init +3; Spd 30 ft; AC 9 (-1 Dex); Melee MW club +11/+6 (1d6+5/crit x2); AL LN; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +5; Str 16, Dex 9, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 16.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +5 (2), Diplomacy +9 (6), Handle Animal +7 (4), Intimidate +7 (4), Perform (drinking song) +4 (1), Ride (horse) +3 (4), Sense Motive +4 (1); Courage, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Leadership (9), Toughness, Weapon Focus (club), Weapon Specialization (club).

*Languages:* Hibernatian.

*Possessions:* a masterwork club.

Robert "Bobby" Haight has a large build, the result of a lack of major physical activity. His skin is pale from staying indoors most of the day, and his hairline is receding. When working, he wears the uniform he

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designed when he started the police force: a red coat, black trousers, and a black cap. Even in his advanced years, he has a commanding presence.

He speaks with a distinct accent, often omitting the letter "h" from his speech, and calling people "lad" or "lass."

**Background:** Robert Haight always had a sense of justice. He despaired whenever he saw the aristocracy treading on the lower classes with impunity, knowing that he couldn't stop it.

He organized the first true police force, under the banner of law, order, and justice for all. The church and the aristocrats dogged his heels, repeatedly attempting to disband this force in favor of their own forms of justice, but the common folk vastly outnumbered the aristocrats and the theocrats, and the "Bobbies," as they are now known, came into existence. At first, they were "Bobby's boys," which was later shortened to "Bobby's," and then altered to "Bobbies."

In the first year, crime dropped as the Bobbies helped to settle disputes and bring thieves and murderers to justice. The common folk held their police in high regard, as they had given them a greater sense of hope of the good in the world.

However, after twenty years on the force, Robert retired from active duty. He leads the Bobbies from behind a desk, though he never refuses to get back out there and bust some bad guys.

**Current Sketch:** As chief of police, Haight no longer has an active role in the Stratford community, mostly confined to his desk job. He has let his formerly athletic body go, but his mind is still set on administering justice throughout Hiberiate. Haight also deals with internal affairs, investigating corruption in the ranks and bringing the law to those who believe they are above the law.

Unfortunately, his job carries a great deal of stress (the cause of his receding hairline), and so he needs an outlet for it. To keep the guilt

off his conscience, Robert has remained unmarried, despite many offers of marriage in the past.

**Combat:** Robert still carries his billy club, and many would-be criminals can attest to his prowess with the heavy wooden cudgel. As a bringer of justice, Robert considers combat a last resort, relying on diplomacy to defuse the situation before violence occurs.

## Pontiff Donovan Lindor

Male human Clr14: CR 14; ECL 14; Medium-size Humanoid (human) (5 ft. 4 in. tall); HD 14d8-42; hp 24; Init +0; Spd 20 ft; AC 10; Melee +10/+5 MW light mace (1d6-2/crit x2); AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +9; Str 6, Dex 10, Con 4, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 18.

*Skills and Feats:* Diplomacy +22 (17), Knowledge (nobility & royalty) +10.5, Knowledge (religion) +19; Leadership (18), Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Skill Focus (Knowledge [nobility & royalty]), Skill Focus (Knowledge [religion]), Voice of Wrath, Weapon Focus (light mace).

*Languages:* Hibernian.

*Cleric Spells per Day:* None.

*Possessions:* a masterwork light mace and cleric's vestments.

In the years since Hiberiate appeared on maps of the Sea of Sorrows, Pontiff Donovan Lindor has been the spiritual leader of the people. He wears the extravagant, gold-embroidered robes of his position and carries a ceremonial scepter. Lindor himself is a shriveled old man of about seventy or eighty years, although he is actually in his early sixties.

**Background:** Lindor and the church claim that he is a direct descendant of the first Pontiff, and thus entitled to all the powers and privileges that the position represents. Many speculate as to the veracity of this claim, but they have the common sense not to discuss it in public.

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He grew up in what is now called Donovanshire, starting as a choir boy in the church, and working his way up the ranks through a combination of servitude, brown-nosing, and blackmail. He ruined more than a few careers on his self-serving rise to the top, and the other candidates for his current position were not excluded because they were not descendants of the first Pontiff, but because Lindor had them discredited and humiliated.

**Current Sketch:** Although his health is rapidly degenerating, Lindor feels secure in his position as supreme ruler of Hiberate. The church considers him infallible, so he considers himself above the law, even the laws his holy tome proclaims, and indulges in activities that would rock the very foundations of Hibernian society if they were exposed.

He pays the Bobbies a large amount of hush money to ensure that his secret activities remain secret, and practices the arts of "You scratch my back, I'll scratch yours" and "I'll make you an offer you can't refuse." He acts more like a mob boss than the spiritual leader of an entire nation. Anyone who even intimates that he knows more than he should disappears within days, and the event is blamed on the nearest convenient peasant (or an aristocrat whom Lindor dislikes).

**Combat:** Old and weak, Lindor is ill equipped to defend himself if somebody attacks him. However, a retinue of priests and bodyguards almost always surrounds him, and he has decreed that anyone attacking him is guilty of high treason, an offence punishable by death.

**False Cleric:** Lindor perpetuates an empty faith, and thus receives no spells or divine abilities.

## Ramar Burke, male caliban

Rog3/Exp10: CR 13; Medium-size Humanoid (caliban) (5 ft. 10 in. tall); HD 3d6+3 plus 10d6+10; hp 61; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Init.); Spd 60 ft. (base 30); AC 20 (+3 Dex, +5 armor, +1 natural, +1 deflection); Ranged +10/+5 +1/+3 humanbane pistol (1d10+1/crit

x3); SA sneak attack +2d6; SQ evasion, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC), darkvision 60 ft.; AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +10, Will +9; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 10.

*Skills and Feats:* Alchemy +16 (14), Appraise +12 (10), Bluff +14, Disable Device +8 (6), Escape Artist +10 (7), Gather Information +11, Hide +9 (6), Intimidate +14 (12), Knowledge (drugs) +15 (13), Listen +14 (12), Search +12 (10), Spot +14 (12); Alertness, Back to the Wall, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (firearms), Improved Initiative, Jaded. OR 5 (racial).

*Languages:* Darkonese, Hibernian.

*Possessions:* +1/+3 humanbane pistol, gunpowder horn and 10 bullets, +2 studded leather armor, gloves of Dexterity +2, amulet of natural armor +1, ring of protection +1, cloak of resistance +2, boots of striding and springing, dagger, alchemist's lab, masterwork thieves' tools, and an assortment of narcotic drugs.

Ramar Burke is physically hideous, like all calibans. His left eye is half the size of his right, he has a massive underbite, and his right leg is an inch shorter than his left. His skin is greenish-gray, with small, bristly hairs, and oily black hair covers his head. He wears a shirt of studded leather and a cloak to conceal his ghastly appearance. He has needle scars on his arms, a legacy of a lifetime of substance abuse.

One might think that an ugly exterior hides a pure heart, but Ramar is corrupt through and through.

**Background:** Ramar was born in Martira Bay in the year 735. His mother threw him out onto the streets, where he earned a living by buying and selling narcotics. He struck deals with merchants, where they would bring him the drugs, and he would sell them. By 750, Ramar had a thriving black market and dozens of regulars.

Around that time, he was attacked, subdued, and taken across the Sea of Sorrows to the island of Hiberate. His captors introduced him to Elizabeth, a statuesque madam, who

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offered to pay him handsomely for his foul services. Knowing what a person in her position could offer him, he eagerly agreed to become her cohort.

**Current Sketch:** Ramar supplies Elizabeth with drugs and information that she could not otherwise obtain, and she pays him with gold and free access to her girls. She has him addicted to her blood drain, and when she withholds this gift, he suffers incredible pain. He realized too late that she has him where she wants him: under her thumb and at her mercy.

Today, Ramar still sells his vile wares to the downtrodden, though Elizabeth is his primary customer, using his drugs to keep her girls loyal. Ramar, unfortunately, is also addicted to his own drugs, cocaine in particular. He has come close to death several times by mixing his vices.

**Combat:** Ramar can usually intimidate his way out of a confrontation, but if that doesn't work, he'll shoot to kill. If he's encountered while strung out on coke, he isn't much of a challenge (CR 3 in this sorry state).

## The Son of the Black Moon Kerad Dyilf

**Male human Rog4/Ftr8:** CR 12; ECL 12; Medium-size Humanoid (human) (5 ft. 10 in. tall); HD 4d6+8d10; hp 77; Init +3; Spd 30 ft; AC 19 (+3 Dex, +4 armor, +2 dodge); Melee +3 *keen katana* +12/+7 (1d10+4/17-20, crit x2) and melee +2 *keen wakizashi* +11 (1d6+3/17-20, crit x2); SA sneak attack +2d6; SQ evasion, martial arts, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC); AL CN; SV Fort +8, Ref +9, Will +6; Str 13, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 10.

*Skills and Feats:* Balance +13 (10), Bluff +10, Climb +4 (3), Hide +24 (11), Intimidate +11, Jump +12 (11), Listen +11 (9), Move Silently +12 (9), Open Lock +8 (5), Pick Pocket +11 (8), Technique +15, Spot +11 (9), Tumble +13 (10); Ambidexterity, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (katana), Expertise, Initiation into the Way, Iron Will, Mobility, Quick Draw, Spring Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting.

*Martial Arts Maneuvers:* Block, Break Weapon, Catch Weapon, Combination (block and grapple, block and strike), Defensive Stance (x2), Enhanced Strike (x1), Expert Disarm, Grappling Expertise, Instant Stand, Martial Arts Weapon (katana, wakizashi), Roll with the Blow, Unarmed Combat Expertise.

*Languages:* Kerad speaks languages resembling Darkonese and Rokuma, and an unknown tongue.

*Possessions:* *Satsujin* (+3 *keen katana*), *Korosujin* (+2 *keen wakizashi*), +2 *SR 13 shadow coat* (as leather armor), *ring of warmth*, *bracers of missile snaring* (+10 to opposed roll when Catch Weapon and Deflect Projectile are used to catch projectiles), *everburning torch*, a heavy sack containing masterwork thieves' tools and standard adventuring gear.

Kerad was once a handsome "bad boy," but the years have worn at him. Now he has a scruffy goatee and moustache, and his hair has become a little shorter (only halfway down his shoulder blades). His long, heavy black coat is

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tattered at the ends. Kerad once wore a pair of metal shoulder plates on his jacket, but he removed them in shortly after arriving in the Land of Mists. His muscles are more defined, and he's in roughly the same shape he was when he entered Ravenloft twenty years ago.

Except for his facial hair and the marks of age, Kerad looks virtually unchanged. He still has his swords, Satsujin (Murderer) and Korosujin (Destroyer), at his hips, the straps across his chest remain, and the scar on the left side of his face is still prominent and unhealed. His cold green eyes glimmer with anger and sorrow.



**Background:** 1200 years before Kerad was born, a sage and seer penned a prophecy that would haunt his life forever: "Ruination will follow the Son of the Black Moon."

On the hot summer night that Kerad Dyilf came into the world, a black moon hung in the sky, a dire omen that went unnoticed. In his first seven years, Kerad witnessed horrors that no child should: his older brother believed their parents preferred him and tormented him for it, even though they both plainly saw just how much their father had declined; not a day went by that he wouldn't get drunk and abuse the children and their mother. Kerad attempted suicide several times, yet never succeeded. At 17, after having to watch his father beat his mother one time too many, he slit his throat and fled.

Only his hate kept Kerad going for the first year; he crossed the entire country and headed south, toward the great desert. "The Son of the Black Moon" entered a small desert town the day before raiders attacked. The bandit leader challenged him to a fight, and with one swipe, carved a gash into his face. Kerad slid a blade into his throat in return.

With no supplies, Kerad trudged through the desert, believing he would die at any moment. In a dehydrated stupor, he thought he heard a voice in his head, telling him that he wouldn't die yet. From that experience, he came to believe that a supernatural entity pulled the strings of the world just to make his life miserable. He called that entity "Fate."

After spending two years on the run, the young man met what he took as a common highway bandit, even if she was female. Quickly disarming her, he decided to let her live and tag along with him. Over time, Kerad Dyilf and Malra Mytil, a half-elven exile from her elven homeland, grew close, though neither would admit it to the other.

Days afterward, the two met with a tiefling gangster and his male drow bodyguard, who agreed to let them live with them. Kerad



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brought them all together as a cadre with a common goal: the safety and welfare of each other in a world that cared not for them, and proclaimed the group "the Outcasts."

They lived in a dirty safe house with negligible amenities, where Kerad entertained a most unusual guest. The vampire Elizabeth entered his room one night, offering him "a king's ransom, and more" if he would sign his soul over to "The Unspeakable One," a dread god of destruction locked in a perpetual game of Prime Material chess with his eternal enemy.

After a great deal of negotiation, Kerad signed in blood. He realized the extent of the dread contract when the others started to distance themselves from him. He resolved to break the contract as soon as possible for their sake.

However, the deal would not end quickly. The contract stated that he had to perform any service for The Unspeakable One on the Prime, and he commanded Kerad to kill his rival's champion: a vagabond known only as "Falkyn."

Kerad held fast and refused Elizabeth's attempts to seduce him. His contempt extended to The Unspeakable One himself, defying his commands to kill Falkyn. Infuriated, The Unspeakable One commanded Elizabeth to take the half-elf hostage and use her as a bargaining chip.

Instead of complying with the foul god's demands, Kerad turned away and proclaimed that The Unspeakable One violated the terms of their contract by taking Malra hostage. Leaving his battle, Kerad discarded the swords The Unspeakable One gave him by dropping them into a volcano. It erupted, and Kerad stood and refused to run any longer. He died with Malra's name on his lips.

Fate spoke to him in the haze between life and death. Once again, it told him he would not die yet. He awoke on a stone altar with a robed priestess standing over him. His first act

was to find Malra and apologize for his actions. On that night, he expressed his love for her, and when she reciprocated, he could ask for nothing more.

The priestess, however, had plans for him. She desired godhood, and he and the Outcasts would assist her in finding the regalia to complete the required ceremony. The other Outcasts died to retrieve the two artifacts, and Malra lost her life when she stood in Falkyn's way.

Falkyn, his student, and Kerad combined their power to stop the priestess from completing the ceremony. Unfortunately, Kerad discovered Malra's body, blamed Falkyn for it, and beat him almost to death. After burying her, Kerad realized that he let them all die, because he allowed his employer too much freedom to command the Outcasts. Elizabeth taunted him about his lifestyle choices, but when she brought up Malra, he viciously turned on her. She managed to talk him down from threatening to destroy her by offering him a way to resurrect Malra, but as he followed her, a heavy fog enveloped them, and the two were never heard from again.

**Current Sketch:** Kerad eventually entered Ravenloft, and has spent every day since raging at Fate for ruining his life after he managed to piece together something he could live with. He now spends his life in one of two states: either melancholic and pining for his lost love, or raging at anyone who tries to get too close to him. He believes that Fate will allow him to achieve a small measure of happiness, and then brutally take it away. He believes suicide is the coward's way out, and loathes the very thought.

His past will forever haunt him: his wound bleeds profusely if he strikes a mortal blow through the neck, and he sees the hazy apparition of Fate in his dreams. Every attempt to bring any of the Outcasts back from death fails and drives him further into despair, knowing he will never know Malra's sweet caress ever again.

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Of course, he does not allow anyone to know his history; he puts on an air of disinterest, and acts like the world is beneath him. If he has an opportunity to make a cutting remark or irritate an authority figure (preferably male), he won't pass it up.

Kerad once commanded the ultimate power: the macrocosm. Able to draw upon the very life force of the world itself, he was truly invincible. After passing through the mists, his connection with the world disappeared, leaving him powerless. He now relies on the martial techniques he gathered over the years from observation and improvisation. That power is what Elizabeth wanted to taste, and now that he has lost his spiritual connection, Elizabeth will forever be denied her ultimate prize, but she doesn't know that.

**Combat:** Without the awesome power of the macrocosm to gird him anymore, Kerad has had to take protective measures in combat. He has drilled with his blades, turning himself into a whirlwind of steel and blood. He will draw his swords at the slightest provocation, and won't hesitate to demonstrate his prowess by splitting a wooden pole, a flagon of ale, or even removing a finger with a quick flash of steel.

**Special Qualities:** Martial Arts (Ex): Kerad uses the martial arts rules in the d20 Skill-n-Feat Martial Arts system.

## Further Reading

Kerad appears as an antagonist in "A Vagabond's Tale," and his tale and his struggle with Elizabeth is further told in "Shades of Grey." Both stories are available for perusal at [SteelFalcon.Net](http://SteelFalcon.Net).



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## HIBERNATE APPENDIX: THREE NPC

By: DarkSoldier

There are three important players in the game between Elizabeth and Kerad. Arik is Elizabeth's pet project; Malra desperately seeks Kerad; the Black Knight has a lifelong grudge with the dark soldier.

### ARIK DYILF

#### A Chip Off the Old Block

"How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is / to have a thankless child!"

— King Lear, Act I, Sc. 4, 310-311

Children need direction from their parents in order to grow up properly. Some parents are not fit to raise children, and leave them with others to raise them. These children, if not seen to properly, can grow up misguided and unable to tell right from wrong.

### ARIK DYILF

**Male human Rog6/Ftr2:** CR 8; ECL 8; Medium-size Humanoid (human); HD 6d6+6 plus 2d10+2; hp 45; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Init.); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+3 Dex, +2 armor, +1 deflection); Melee brass knuckle +8/+2 (1d4+2/crit x2) or ranged dagger +9 (1d4+2/crit 19-20/x2); SA Sneak attack +3d6; SQ Evasion, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked); AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +4; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 10. Height 5'6", weight 120 lbs.

*Skills and Feats:* Appraise +5 (2), Balance +13 (8), Bluff +10 (9), Climb +10 (8), Disable Device +11 (8), Escape Artist +6 (4), Hide +12 (9), Intimidate +9 (7), Jump +10 (6), Listen +9 (7), Move Silently +22 (9), Open Lock +12 (9), Pick Pocket +12 (9), Search +11 (8), Spot +11 (9), Tumble +11 (8); Dodge, Expertise, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Run, Weapon Focus (brass knuckle).

*Languages:* Mordentish\*.

*Signature Possessions:* Gloves of Dexterity +2 (included above), ring of protection +1, boots of elvenkind (included above), +1 padded armor, one set of brass knuckles, three daggers, masterwork thieves' tools, and the clothes on his back. He also has a silver locket that supposedly contains a portrait of his parents.

The 20 year-old Arik Dyilf is best summed up as a juvenile delinquent. Arik's clothing is dark and torn, and it mostly hangs from his wiry body. He has pallid skin, dark, greasy hair and sunken, yet piercing green eyes that stare with intensity unmatched by any other young man. In fact, many people have mistaken him for a vampire, a result of which is the source of a small puncture scar on his chest.

Arik wears black gloves that conceal the brass knuckles he wears on his right hand, and his waist-length black coat hides a set of daggers strapped across his torso. He doesn't wear any obvious jewelry; a ring is beneath a glove, but he usually pawns any finery he steals. Around his neck he wears a small silver locket on a thin silver chain.

### BACKGROUND

Arik grew up in a Dementlieu orphanage, found by the anchorites that ran it, along with a small silver locket and a note reading, "This is Arik Dyilf. Please take care of him." He lived with the other children until he came of age. With a meager education, he tried

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to get a job somewhere, anywhere, but business after tradesperson turned him down. Having nothing else to go to, Arik fell in with the wrong crowd and learned how to commit burglary and other petty crimes to support himself.

For five years, Arik broke into the homes of Dementlieu's aristocracy and stole their money and jewelry, pawning the baubles for whatever he could get. During his criminal career, he spent months in jail when the law could catch him, but they could not deter him from continuing down the path he had set.

His first and only friend was another orphan who joined him in his criminal crusade, but the young man met his doom early on when they decided to break into the house of Dominic d'Honaire. Although they sneaked past the staff and into d'Honaire's bedchamber and looted the room, they didn't know that Dominic had returned and entered shortly after them.

Dominic raised his pistol and fired, striking Arik's friend and killing him almost immediately. Arik jumped out the window, getting away with only a silver necklace and his life, but he learned from that experience that he didn't need anyone tagging along with him.

Shortly after the incident, Arik decided to leave Dementlieu. He hitched and stowed his way to Mordentshire, and resumed his larcenous ways upon arrival, racking up a criminal record there, as well.

One day, he received a mysterious message, telling him to go to Hibernat, where he could get anything he wanted. After finding out where Hibernat was, Arik made his way north and got onto the island. He never met his patron, but instead received more messages. By following the instructions presented, Arik managed to kill one of the top rogues in the land and take over his criminal underground. Now in a position of relative power, Arik feels he had no superiors, except for the patron who still sends him mysterious, untraceable messages.

## CURRENT SKETCH

Arik disrespects authority (especially the church of Ezra) and makes his own rules. He is impossible to control in any conventional way. His personality is stunted (couple that with a lack of parental figures and there's a recipe for a sociopath); he has difficulty dealing with his anger, he is very aggressive if he believes he's been insulted, and he takes everything personally.

He cannot form relationships; this stems partly from the loss of his friend, but when he looks at somebody, his first thought is always what he can gain from using them. Having spent some time in the red-light district of Chateaufaux and the company of Elizabeth's girls, Arik has come to see women as objects to use and discard when he's done with them. He has no respect for them.

Arik used to live day-to-day, stealing food and money, and finding any convenient place to sleep for the night, but after coming to Hibernat and taking over a small criminal fiefdom, he has access to all sorts of goods. He has no respect for anybody except himself, but he reserves most of his contempt for the church of Ezra, and never hesitates to spit on a church or an anchorite.

Arik has no goals in life, except to find his parents. The only key is the silver locket that he has had since he came to the orphanage, which contains a picture of the people he believes are his parents: a cheerful-looking half-elven woman with green hair and a human male with a scar over his left eye.

## COMBAT

Arik loves to attack from behind or from the shadows. Any maneuver that gives him an advantage is his favorite. Fighting dirty is the only way to go, since a fair fight means he might get hurt or worse. After beating somebody, Arik loots the body and flees.

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## THE TRUTH

Arik Dyilf is the son of Kerad Dyilf and Malra Mytil. When Elizabeth turned her into a vampire, Malra was carrying Kerad's child, but nobody knew it at the time. Malra somehow brought the child to term and gave birth, but by that time, the Mists had embraced her. She left the fully human child at an orphanage, as she could not take care of a child, left her locket with him, and fled into the night, crying tears of blood.

Elizabeth is his patron; she found out about him and then brought him to Hiberna. She plans to use him against Kerad, and possibly Malra. She is making sure that he is sufficiently screwed up before she unleashes him on his parents.

The locket Arik carries around his neck is the companion to the locket that Kerad carries in his pocket. They have the same picture: a portrait of Kerad and Malra in happier times. Arik is looking for both of them, but he has yet to find either of them. What will happen when Arik finds them is something that nobody can predict.

## MALRA MYTIL

### Tears of Blood

" 'Tis better to have  
loved and lost, then  
never to have loved at  
all. "

—Alfred Lord Tennyson

Many believe in that statement, but for some people, love can go beyond the grave. The undead cling vainly to past lives, hoping that the emotions they felt can stir their still hearts. Some seek out lost loves for another reason: to have somebody they once cared about be the instruments of their destruction.

## MALRA MYTIL

**Female half-elf fledgling vampire Rog6/Wiz3:**  
CR 11; ECL 14; Medium-size Undead; HD 6d12+3d12; hp 38; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Init.); Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (+2 Dex, +2 bracers of armor, +6 natural); Melee slam +8 (1d6+4+energy drain/crit x2) or +1 shortspear +8 (1d8+4/crit x3) or melee +1 dagger +8 (1d4+4/crit 19-20/x2) or ranged touch +5 (by spell); SA Blood drain, children of the night, create spawn, domination, energy drain, sneak attack +3d6; SQ Alternate form, cold & electricity resistance 20, damage reduction 15/+1, evasion, fast healing 5, gaseous form, half-elven traits, spider climb, turn resistance +4, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked), undead; AL CN/CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +10, Will +8; Str 17, Dex 15, Con —, Int 17, Wis 17, Cha 18. Height 5'5", weight 126 lbs.

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +22 (10), Climb +10 (7), Concentration +6 (4), Disguise +13 (9), Escape Artist +9 (7), Hide +20 (10), Intimidate +13 (9), Jump +7 (4), Knowledge (arcana) +7 (4), Listen +23 (9), Move Silently +19 (9), Search +22 (9), Spellcraft +7 (4), Spot +23 (9), Wilderness Lore +7 (4); Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Expertise, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Scribe Scroll, Simple Weapon Proficiency, Spell Focus (Evocation). OR 1 (racial).

*Languages:* Elven\*, Homeland Common.

*Wizard Spells Per Day:* 4/3/2. Base DC = 12 + spell level, 14 + spell level for evocation spells. Signature Possessions: +1 shortspear, +1 dagger, +2 bracers of armor.

Malra looks like a forlorn half-elven maiden with forest green hair, alabaster skin, and soft green eyes. She commonly wears buckskin trousers, knee-high boots, and a white shirt with leather bracers protecting her arms. She wears a heavy cloak with the hood drawn up to conceal her face. She carries a shortspear decorated with a large feather just beneath the head, and in her belt she has a wicked-looking serrated dagger.

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Unfortunately, she is also a vampire. She has tiny retractable fangs for canine teeth, and her skin feels like ice, as no blood flows through her body.

## BACKGROUND

When Malra was born, everyone in her elven village was horrified to learn of the “human taint” in her blood. For most of her life, she received disrespect, called “half-breed” and many other names by her fully elven peers. Other, older children, picked on her, and her mother seemed to have little interest in taking care of her.

At the age of 20 (the half-elven equivalent of 15), she decided to leave everything behind. Before she left the village, she stole several magic items from other elves, especially her tormentors. Putting it all into a sack, she ran as far as she could before hiding out for the night.

She managed to survive on her own for the next 12 years, until she tried to rob a lone traveler on the road. Her attempt did not impress the young man, and he knocked her spear away. She pleaded for mercy, claiming she only did this to survive. Overnight, these two, Malra Mytil and Kerad Dyilf, became allies, allies against a world that seemed to be out to get them at every turn. After breaking out of jail with a fellow inmate (a tiefling) and returning to his safe house, the three of them and the inmate’s bodyguard (a drow male) came together as “the Outcasts.”

Kerad started acting unusual, and Malra took it upon herself to investigate. She discovered that he had made a deal with an entity called “the Unspeakable One,” and a woman was representing him. She could not let herself get discovered, so Malra did not let on that she knew what he had done. Malra noticed that Kerad would get nervous around her, especially on the rare occasions when their eyes met, and she started to fall in love with him.

However, she believed her love was unrequited, and did not pursue a relationship. When the other woman, a powerful vampire named Elizabeth, attacked her, she screamed for Kerad, but he had left a while before, and she could only stand in helpless terror as she saw an image of Kerad battling his arch-enemy, a man named Falkyn. A hideous voice told Kerad to kill him, or Elizabeth would kill her, and she pleaded with Kerad to save her. When Kerad told the voice that they had broken the agreement, Elizabeth had no choice but to release Malra and leave.

Having survived a brush with death itself, Malra desperately wanted to tell Kerad her feelings, but her fellow Outcasts told her that he had died shortly after the battle. Malra started a downward spiral into oblivion, indulging in frequent drinking binges and returning to the Outcasts’ safe house blind drunk, pining for her lost love.

One day, a few months later, while she tried to find solace at the bottom of a whiskey bottle, a note came to her. She went to a room in the adjoining inn, where a familiar figure greeted her. Kerad had returned, and with a soft touch of his hands, he cleansed the alcohol from her body. Kerad told her that he loved her, and when she heard those words, Malra could ask for nothing more. Her life had turned completely around, and they made love for the first time that night, Kerad promising her that he would never leave her.

Kerad’s return brought new problems: a cleric of a goddess of death wanted to ascend to godhood herself, and she wanted the Outcasts to aid her in exchange for resurrecting Kerad. Although they got better accommodations in the deal, Malra felt oppressed because she believed the cleric felt Kerad was a prize to take from her. The cleric sent the others to retrieve the artifacts she required for the ritual of ascension.

Kerad returned, but the others had died to retrieve the artifacts. Kerad and Malra expressed their displeasure, but a few days later, the two of them had to lead a small army of einherjar to retrieve the last piece of the ritual: a



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pure soul, and they had found one in a noble knight, a man whom Falkyn happened to have as a student.

After a quick battle, Kerad and Malra returned with their captive, but Falkyn followed. The cleric had Malra waiting for him, but rather than interfere with him as she had ordered, Malra told him to help Kerad. As soon as he went out of earshot, Elizabeth attacked her, draining her of blood and leaving her for Kerad to discover.

She lay dead for several hours, and Kerad buried her with great sorrow. The next night, she clawed her way out of the grave, full of inhuman vitality, but that vitality needed sustenance, and maddened with hunger, Malra killed the first person she met, gorging on his blood.

Horried at what Elizabeth had turned her into, Malra wanted to throw herself into the rays of the rising sun, but before the sun could crest the horizon, the Mists rose from the ground and stole her away to a land of greater horror.

Just recently, Elizabeth discovered her presence, and sent her enthralled minions to capture her. They dragged her from Barovia to Hiberate, kicking and screaming the whole way, and Elizabeth performed an ancient vampire ritual she learned from her creator on Malra, making her completely unable to directly harm her, and able to control her actions while leaving her mind untouched.

## CURRENT SKETCH

Malra hates full-blooded elves because the elves of her home ostracized her, and she hates full-blooded humans because they see her as less of a person. Only with half-breeds, the plane touched, and other social outcasts can she find companionship, but her only true love is Kerad.

Kerad was the first person to treat her with any measure of dignity. She loves him unconditionally, but now that she has become a

creature of darkness, she doesn't want anyone other than Kerad to destroy her. She has a heavy stake that she wants him to drive through her chest.

She tries to fight the monster she has become, but when the hunger calls, she cannot resist it. She has killed several people by feeding on them, and in the first encounter, she actually felt pleasure from sucking her hapless victim dry. That terrified her, and now she tries to take as little as possible from her victims.

She also hates Elizabeth. Other than having Kerad's hand be the one that destroys her, Malra wants nothing more than to rip Elizabeth apart. Unfortunately, she is totally unable to lift a finger against her in her current condition, and Elizabeth is using her to find Kerad and bring him to her.

## COMBAT

After seeing the effects of her newfound powers, Malra is terrified of fighting hand-to-hand. She uses her spear and dagger, but would rather flee than fight. When her hunger takes over, she attacks barehanded, ignoring most blows and going right for the throat. If, however, she can get a victim unawares, she prefers to bite in a less conspicuous location, such as under the arm or the femoral artery in the upper thigh.

The save DC for Malra's vampire powers is 18.

Special Qualities:

**Alternate Form (Su):** Malra can turn into a dire bat at will as the spell polymorph self cast by a 12th level sorcerer.

**Half-Elven Traits (Ex):** Immune to sleep spells and similar magical effects; +2 racial saving throw bonus against Enchantment spells or effects; low-light vision; +1 racial bonus to Listen, Search, and Spot checks.

**Vampire Weaknesses:** Malra does not need a coffin, as she never had one to begin with. All she needs is a space that is completely sealed

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from the sun, and it doesn't need to be the same place every night. All her other weaknesses are unchanged, except for the following: she cannot cross an unbroken line of black rose petals, and the touch of a black rose burns like holy water. In order to destroy her, she must be staked, a black rose placed in her hands, and she must be buried.

## THE BLACK KNIGHT

### Misplaced Vengeance

"For never can true reconciliation grow, where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep."

—John Milton, *Paradise Lost*

The few who have survived tell tales of a lone rider who comes out of the Mists. He watches silently from afar on the back of a flaming horse, but he soon rides in, drawing his bloody blade. Nobody knows who he is or why he does this, but all they know is that he rarely spares anyone.

## THE BLACK KNIGHT

**Male cursed human Ftr11:** CR 11; ECL 11; Medium-size Humanoid (human); HD 10d10+20; hp 72; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 23 (+1 Dex, +12 armor); Melee +2 death bane bastard sword +16/+11/+6 (1d10+7/crit 17-20/x2) or melee armor claw +14/+9/+4 (1d10+4 plus contagion/crit x2); SQ Mist rider, locate creature; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 17, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 10. Height 6'1", weight 198 lbs.

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +7, Handle Animal +16 (14), Intimidate +9 (7), Ride (horse) +18 (14); Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Improved Critical (bastard sword), Iron Will, Mounted Combat, Power Attack (up to +11), Ride-By Attack, Sunder, Trample, Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Weapon Specialization (bastard sword). OR 6 (cursed).

*Languages:* Balok, Darkonese, Falkovnian, Lamordian, Mordentish, Tepestani, Vaasi.

*Signature Possessions:* +2 death bane bastard sword and demon armor.

The Black Knight rides on the back of a dread nightmare (DoDark pg. 109), traveling from one side of the Core to the other, across the seas, and through the Mists to the isolated islands. Two hard red eyes glare from the eye slits of a suit of demonic black full plate. His

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gauntlets are shaped as talons, always coated with fresh blood, as is the bastard sword he carries at his side. A long red cloak billows behind him, dancing demonically in even the slightest breeze. Nobody has ever heard him speak.

## BACKGROUND

Lacar Dyilf was only four when his little brother Kerad arrived. At first, Lacar was intrigued at the new arrival, but when he saw that Kerad got all the attention that he used to get, he started acting out, trying to get the attention back. He did not yet understand that infants need attention, and he assumed that his parents had forgotten about him.

Lacar would break things, yell and scream, throw things around, and jump on furniture, but he only received scolding and punishment. He blamed Kerad for his punishments, and he even attacked him when he was only one year old.

The relationship between the Dyilf brothers strained as they grew. Their father started drinking heavily, leading to abuse to both the children and their mother. Lacar blamed Kerad for their father's lapse into alcoholism, and for the fact that the family hardly had any money to get by with. When Lacar attacked Kerad, the younger brother would never fight back, and that made Lacar feel good to see Kerad lying on the ground bleeding and bruised.

When Lacar turned eighteen, he had had enough; enough of his father's abuse, his mother's insanity, and his brother. He hated them all, but he hated Kerad most of all. In Lacar's mind, if Kerad had never been born, their parents would still love him. Packing very little, Lacar left the house and disappeared in the middle of the night.

He traveled south, leaving a trail of blood and bruises. Every day he went without food, he cursed his brother. Every day he had to fight for shelter, he cursed his brother. Never once did he stop and think that he could blame only himself for his actions. He refused to take

responsibility for himself. If he turned around, went home, and changed his ways, he could have saved himself, but having lived the way he lived for so long, he wouldn't change.

He committed a string of violent attacks on anyone in his way as he ran away from himself. Eventually, a higher power took notice, and the Mists reached out to him. He didn't run away, but after the Mists took him, he realized that he should have.

## CURRENT SKETCH

The dark powers have cursed Lacar to ride endlessly through the Mists as he searches for his brother, who came to Ravenloft shortly after he did. His curse has made it unnecessary for him to eat, drink, or sleep, but in exchange, he can do nothing but ride in search for his brother.

Two voices speak to him: one is his conscience, a tiny little squeak that tells him that he has let his anger rule his actions for too long, and he should just drop the grudge and make up with his brother, who probably wants the same thing. The other is the nightmare; his mount taunts him, occasionally laughing at him, mocking him with "what-ifs" about Kerad becoming respected, rich, and powerful, and leaving his brother in his miserable state. It eggs Lacar on and fuels his rage, urging him to hunt Kerad down and kill him savagely. Nobody else can hear the nightmare speak to him; it communicates in a telepathic whisper.

In truth, Lacar wants to stop, but he can't find the drive to end it. He realizes that he's always been a petty bully, and he regrets what his rages have done to people, but whenever he voices it, the nightmare calls him a weakling. He doesn't know what might happen when he inevitably encounters Kerad, but he's afraid of it, and he subconsciously avoids a direct confrontation with his brother.

## COMBAT

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Blood, pain, and death follow the Black Knight. He doesn't want to kill, but the nightmare urges him on, taunting him with the allegation that everyone he encounters knows exactly where Kerad is, but they don't want to tell him. It tells him that they should die for their insolence. He is rather susceptible to suggestions, so most people he meets die at his blade. The nightmare urges him to claw his opponents so he can inflict a debilitating disease on them and extend their agony.

**Mist Rider (Su):** When the Black Knight rides into the Mists, he can merge with it, and travel to anywhere else in Ravenloft at a speed of 240 feet. He temporarily gains the Mists descriptor until he leaves the Mists.

**Locate Creature (Sp):** The Black Knight can locate creature at will when he seeks Kerad (and only Kerad).

## ADVENTURE HOOKS

- ♦ The PC's are caught in the act in Mordent or Dementlieu, and as punishment, they are sent to find another criminal who has escaped his own punishment. The trail of Arik Dyilf runs through Dementlieu and Mordent, and then sweeps back north toward an island in the Sea of Sorrows.
- ♦ A young half-elven woman hires the PC's to help her find somebody. Although she travels with them, she refuses to go by day, they never see her eat, and if physical contact is made, she feels like ice. If they decide that she's a vampire, she tries to talk them out of killing her, but flees if it fails.
- ♦ A small-time villain that the PC's defeat is actually a thrall of Elizabeth's. She isn't particularly concerned with him, but the fact that she lost him has made her rather upset. For the next period of time, she sends more minions after the PC's, hoping to kill them, rough them up, or convince them to work for her.
- ♦ Elizabeth has finally located Kerad! She contacts the PC's through proxies and hires them to capture him and bring him to her, but there's a catch; somebody else has an interest in his well being, and won't take kindly to a bunch of yokels beating him up and dragging him off. This patron could be anybody in Ravenloft with significant power, or possibly the Black Knight, who has also just found him.



# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## THE HOSPICE OF SILVER LIGHT EVEN IN THE DARKEST OF PLACES, YOU WILL ALWAYS FIND LIGHT

By: Eddy Brennan  
(The Lost Hedgewitch)

Hidden beyond a veil of  
secrets and mysticism,  
another hospice dedicated  
to the worship of Hala  
lends help to those  
fighting evil and tending  
to those in need.

This treatise is a description of one of the many hospices throughout Ravenloft that are dedicated to Hala, the Caregiver and Goddess of healing. It is mostly written in a fashion similar to that found within the Van Richten Guides, in the first person through the character Megan Llewelyn, The Vallaki Witch.

The character is one I have grown quite fond of since her creation and continues to grow as her fictional existence continues, having appeared in several Malodorous Goat forums, stories and the Galen Saga.

### Introduction

The Church of Hala is a secretive one, for though they portray the image as a religion not dissimilar to that of Ezra, their practices are indeed as different as they possibly could be beyond the veils of walls and curtained windows. These people are not unlike myself, they too are witches and strive to keep balance and love in all they hold dear. Even so, some of

our basic outlooks on the same religion are relatively different.

Whilst I revere in the following of several deities, the Church appears to welcome only a single Deity into their hearts. However their Hala may bestow a great many different aspects and faces in times of need, I am, as yet, unaware of these and make speak of the prospect in a hypothetical sense as the strongest foundation.

As I said above, I have only been in this world for several years. My old home was not too different from the world you were all born in. Men and women of great ill deeds led the path into darkness for many, only a few truly welcomed goodness into their hearts. Still, when I did arrive on this world, I felt as alien as any other possibly could. Not being able to speak any tongue known to those I met dragged on my hopes and spirit until I met a strange group of folk hidden deep in a place I prefer to avoid mentioning to many, for their own safety as well as my own.

As I learned much from these people, I heard nothing of others like myself, Witches. Many of you may well spit upon the word, but I must tell you that we are not to be feared, hated or cast away, we bear the same warmth and love as anyone in the most blessed churches in the many lands we know. It was not until I read a tome by the esteemed Dr. Rudolph Van Richten, did I become aware of others like myself in this world. Taking this to heart as a ray of hope, I went out in search of them. Instead of seeking out those van Richten spoke of, I searched for other monasteries and convents that may hold Witches and Warlocks (the latter not existing within the realities of my home world).

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After much searching however, I did succeed in finding a small hospice just north of the Hazlani-Barovian border near Immol, the Hospice of the Silver Light. This discovery came as quite a surprise to myself, the area was completely isolated and almost upon my own doorstep in Vallaki, only a few days travel away, over the rugged terrain of southern Barovia.

My arrival at the hospice appeared to have been expected to some extent. It appears that they knew of me long before I knew of them. This puzzled me a great deal, feeling as though I was always one step behind those among the staff living behind the stonewalls.

The stay was pleasant however, and I seek to share what I found there with many others, so this document is my way of paying homage to these wonderful people.

## The Hospice

The hospice started as a simple structure split into three sections, before being built onto in times since. The first of these was the Church.

It appears not unlike a small chapel found in most villages that bear a temple dedicated to Ezra, though the entire floor space is devoid of any furnishings or benches you may seem more accustomed to in churches you more commonly attend. It is a small affair, measuring some fourteen strides by nine. There is room enough for the members of the staff and several guests in comfort, but nearly twice this many may fit in cramped conditions. The wall opposite the large door that forms the main entrance to the hospice is home to a great tapestry, that I have learned to be the sacred altar of the hospice. I have to admit to have been impressed each time I looked upon it as a great piece of work and devotion to ones craft.

One thing that I found of interest in this part of the hospice is the tall ceiling, something in the region of nineteen and a half spans, at its tallest point.

The second part of the original structure is the Prayer Rooms. This lies behind a small door that leads off from the right hand side of the main altar in the chapel. There are eight of these in all leading off from a central passageway, each measuring almost identically in all dimensions. It took some time to properly measure these rooms, as the cramped conditions made it hard to measure a good stride. Once I succeeded in doing so however, I reasoned that each chamber was two strides along each edge of the floor and roughly four spans high.

The low ceiling had me question Raining Star (I respect the request of privacy of the staff's true names, so I mention them instead by those names they use in their Craft) about it. The chambers were able to block out all light and the individual would be seated in the center of the chamber, meditating or searching the Weave for whatever wisdom they were seeking. Having never heard of a practice such as this, I was offered a chance to experience it myself. I have to admit that it made contact with the Weave much easier than it was in the small altar room in my own home outside Vallaki and have returned to the hospice on several occasions since to search the Weave for greater wisdom.

Third, and last of the original parts of the hospice are the sleeping chambers. These run along the rear of the structure, behind a small door in the rear wall of the chapel. The corridor that they lead from runs along the opposite wall behind the main altar and along one set of the Prayer Rooms. These five long, yet narrow chambers each hold enough bunks to sleep fifteen members of staff. Apart from these, the spartan furnishings within do allow for small chests to hold robes and some personal effects belonging to the staff. These rooms measuring roughly nine strides by five and hold three bunks each.

In addition to the original structure, the Hospice has been built onto over time. There is a floor above the Prayer Rooms and sleeping chambers, which is accessible by a flight of stairs found outside the main structure. A concept I found rather difficult to get to terms



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with, but the original construction of the hospice did not allow for such things as interior stairways, should the hospice be extended. This upper floor is mainly devoted to extra sleeping rooms and a small private chapel for members of the hospice staff only. I was never granted entrance to this room and never stole a glance in privacy, out of respect for their wishes. Other than these rooms, Raining Star also had her own private chamber as the high priestess of the hospice. She quite happily invited me to see it and I have to admit being impressed on her personal collections of works and tomes related to the Craft and its practices. Thankfully I was allowed to copy some recipes for cures to maladies I had previously been incapable of curing.

Raining Stars' chamber was also her private sleeping quarters and altar chamber. It measured the same as the sleeping chambers, but appeared more spacious with only the one person using it. Finally, an additional section has been added to the hospice in the last few years, this being a ward for patients of the hospice that are unfit to travel for their treatments. This ward is a separate building comprising of eight small chambers some four strides by six. They are also adjoined along a single, central passage.

It must be noted that Megan does not use common mathematical measurements, instead relying upon those taken in spans, hands and strides.

A stride is roughly equal to a yard, a span measurement being equal from the tip of a persons middles finger to the outside point of a person's elbow (approximately 16" on Megan), and a hand being the same as that used to measure the height horses (3½" on Megan). This means that the chapel roughly measures 14 yards by 9.

## Role & Practice

As far as I gathered in my visitations to the hospice, the role of the staff is to ensure good health and safety upon others, through whatever means necessary. This appears much similar to the role I find myself in at Vallaki, often required as an herbalist, sage or even a monster hunter. Though no individual role appears to be gender specific at the hospice, male clerics and the Warlocks tend to prefer taking on the forces of darkness more often than the female staff. This is often seen in the different attitudes between the genders. Male staff members do have a strong sense of chaotic attitude about them, which probably prepares them better for coping with the tasks being dealt with when facing the evils of this world.

Even though the Priestesses also fill these roles, it is only on the occasions when there is a severe lack of Warlocks and male Clerics at hand to take care of the matters at hand.

The Hospice, I have discovered, is thought of well in areas of southern Barovia, northern Hazlan and east Kartakass. They are often seen as regular clerics, much the mistake of many that are treaded under the pretence that all members there are clerics of one form or another.

The entire staff of the hospice, or rather those who are present at the time, hold sermons and rituals dedicated to Hala in the form of congregation twice each month. Individual members of the staff hold personal rituals and dedications as often as they feel necessary. To

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me, this gives the Church of Hala a much more relaxed feel than other religions I have encountered in the past, in both this world and the one I previously lived in.

## Identification

Each Witch and Warlock amongst the staff bears the sign of Hala combined with that of the moon on their robes. The stage of the moon's phase in the sigil marks the progress and level of the witch or warlock in their field among the hospice's staff. Those bearing the waxing crescent are of First Degree, meaning that they have only begun their training. Those bearing the half full moon are of second degree and are quite adept in the skills of the Craft; though they require much more learning and practice. Those bearing the full moon are of third degree and fully trained in the Craft. Though these degrees hold little semblance to the clerics of the hospice, they also bear these moon phases in their sigils, though theirs tend to also include the waning phases of the moon, I have even witnessed the dark moon within the sigil on one individual.

The High Priestess of the hospice also adapts the sigil that they wear, by what I have learned from Raining Star. Her own sigil bears a shooting star, from which she gained her Craft name. Also, despite there being no High Priest at the Hospice at the moment, I have been reassured that they are also allotted the same freedom within their identification. I did ask several members of staff on the current absence that of the High Priest, I got no definite answer except that he is indisposed indefinitely.

Other than the sigils, the staff tends to wear similar garb within their own gender. Priests prefer loose fitting pants and tunics of dull colors under gray robes. Priestesses on the other hand have some flair in their dress patterns. Either green or red gowns under the robe of the other color appear to be the trend. However, Raining Star prefers a plain white gown under a red robe. She did explain to me the reason for this, but I have to admit that her

answer would take far too long to scribe here, even if I took out all the flair and left the basic principles. One thing that I have gathered about the High Priests/Priestesses is that they each have the freedom to dress however they feel is appropriate in their roles.

The Degrees of the Witches and Warlocks also define their experience level. A 1st degree initiate is counted as being a Witch or Warlock of having 1 experience level in the Craft. Those of 2nd and 3rd degrees have 2 and 3 experience levels respectively. Witches and Warlocks of 3rd degree may pass beyond their 3rd experience level, though not many exceed 5th or 6th level, however, there is no degree higher than 3rd.

## Membership

Members of the Hospice of Silver Light all bear one common similarity: they all belong to the Church of Hala in some function. Whilst I have mainly encountered those that are Witches or Clerics, I have been informed that this is not the norm amongst the religion. Entire hospices of Clerics or Warlocks do exist, if however rarer than the Witch-led organizations, though these tend to give off the feel and awareness of a hospice dedicated to other churches and pantheons rather than the service to Hala.

The Hospice of Silver Light only welcomes those who follow Hala or have the basic skills to become a Witch or Warlock. The latter two, being in higher preference, though Clerics are more than welcome within the religion, as is the common man.

Clerics, Witches and Warlocks are then trained for at least three years before becoming a full Priest, Priestess or Cleric within the church. Raining Star also told me that the hospice tends to be stricter in regards to training, that each novice, or initiate, should be proficient in manipulating Weave energies at even the most basic level by the end of the first six months of practice. Given that it took me some years to grow into the practice of manipulating the

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Weave as I grew up, this feat is rather astounding to me.

Those who fail to obtain this skill in the initial training tend to become Clerics, though Warlocks may continue to train if they wish so.

## Staff

The Hospice of Silver Light currently holds a staff of 23 priests and priestesses in addition to Raining Star herself. Of these members, I have determined that most of the fifteen female staff are in fact witches, and the remaining few are clerics not unlike those commonly found in other religions. Or rather those seen as more orthodox than the Church of Hala does with some.

The male staff is nearly entirely clerical or training as Warlocks. Only two fully trained Warlocks do reside here, something I have later learned to be unusual among those that follow the Church of Hala. Raining Star has told me that Warlocks and Witches see things at different ends of their worship in Hala, unlike most other hospices and sanctuaries however they lend each other their talents in bringing a unity to their knowledge and abilities. Due to the wanderlust tendencies of the Warlocks however, very few remain within the hospice at any one time. If all of the Warlocks were to be present at any one time however, the staff of the hospice would swell to nearly thirty individuals.

Despite the difference in the duties performed in the hospice, I noticed very little that would note one gender above the other in that importance or seniority. Though the staff is primarily female at the hospice, nearly an equal amount of men are part of the staff, though their rather eclectic, or to hasten a word, chaotic, tendencies cause them to work out in the world at large. All members of either gender very greatly in age and power within the religion.

## Priestess

As our good witch noted above, the staff that continually resides in the hospice is

primarily female. Of these priestesses, only 1-3 is actual clerics and are of experience levels 1-4. These clerics have Major Access to All, Creation and Healing and Minor Access to Elemental (Earth and Water), Protection, Divination and Necromancy. Any cleric may wield bludgeoning weapons of medium size or smaller. They are, however, also allowed access to bows and crossbows. These clerics never make use of shields, but do wear armor, normally hide or chainmail. Female clerics of the Hospice of the Silver Light also have the granted power of *Bless* twice each day.

All other priestesses are witches of levels 1-5 in the Witch kit found in the last section of *Van Richten's Monster Hunters Compendium 3*. Of these witches, only 3-6 (1d4+2) are fully trained witches of 3rd level or higher. Many also started life as thieves, though some were also trained fighters at one time in the past. Their skills as Witches are not changed from those listed in the Van Richten guide.

## Cleric

AC 5 or 6, MV 12, HP by level, THAC0 by level, #ATT 1, DMG by weapon, SA spells, turn undead, SD spells, MR nil, SZ M (5-6'), ML steady (11-12), AL NG.

## Witch

AC 10, MV 12, HP by class and level, THAC0 by class and level, #ATT by class and level, DMG by weapon, SA spells, SD spells, MR nil, SZ M (5-6'), ML average to elite (8-14), AL LN.

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## Priests

Megan is wrong in counting the ratio between Clerics and Warlocks among the priests at the hospice. There are, in fact 4-10 (2d4+2) clerics of levels 1-6 among the priests, the remaining being Warlocks of levels 1-4. About half of these Warlocks are fully trained, those remaining are mostly 2nd level.

The male clerics have Major Access in Necromantic, All and Creation. Other than these schools, they have Minor Access in Healing, Elemental (Fire and Air), Divination and Protection. The male clerics are allowed to wield edged weapon of size medium or smaller and tend to wear scalemail or platemail. They also have the granted power of casting *Combine* twice each day.

The majority of the Warlocks started life as fighters, brigands, bandits and so on, granting them the character class of being a fighter. Only a few are thieves.

## Cleric

AC 4 or 3, MV 12, HP by level, THAC0 by level, #ATT 1, DMG by weapon, SA spells, turn undead, SD spells, MR nil, SZ M (5-6'), ML steady (11-12), AL CG.

## Warlock

AC 5 or 6, MV 12, HP by class and level, THAC0 by class and level, #ATT 1, DMG by weapon, SA spells, SD spells, MR nil, SZ M (6'), ML steady to elite (11-14), AL CG.

## Raining Star

### Hospice Leader

#### 12<sup>th</sup> level Hf Witch, Lawful Good

AC	10	Str	13
Movemen	9	Dex	13
t			
Lvl/HD	9d10+18	Con	15
HP	68	Int	15
THAC0	9	Wis	18
Morale	Champion	Cha	15
	(15)		
# Att.	2	XP	None
Dam./Att.	By weapon		
Spec. Att.	Weapon	Specialization,	
	Spells		
Spec. Def.	Bravery, Spells		
MR	None		

#### Spell List: (5/4/4/2)

**1st Level** – *Luck\**, *Reveal the Weave\**, *Bless*, *Combine*, *Purify Food & Drink*, *Create Food & Water*, *Create Water*, *Cure Light Wounds*.

**2nd Level** – *Arcane Sights\**, *Master Coven Magic\**, *Messenger*, *Slow Poison*, *Good Berry*.

**3rd Level** – *Lethe\**, *Hold Animal*, *Create Food & Water*, *Stone Shape*, *Water Breathing*, *Water Walking*, *Plant Growth*, *Snare*, *Tree*, *Continual Light*, *Starshine*.

**4th Level** – *The Weave's Bounty\**, *Animal Summoning 1*, *Call Woodland Beings*, *Giant Insects*, *Repel Insects*, *Cure Serious Wounds*, *Neutralize Poison*, *Hold Plant*.

\*These spells are taken from the Guide to Witches in *Van Richten's Monster Hunters Compendium III*.

#### Coven Magic

**1st Level** – *Dancing Lights*, *Enlarge*, *Light*, *Spider Climb*, *Detect Magic*, *Read Magic*, *Identify*.

**2nd Level** – *Fog Cloud*, *Irritation*, *Pyrotechnics*, *Shatter*, *Ray of Enfeeblement*, *Detect Invisibility*, *Spectral Hand*.

**3rd Level** – *Delude*, *Infravision*, *Item*, *Slow*, *Hold Person*, *Spectral Force*, *Hold Undead*.

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Raining Star is long past her prime and possibly into her early seventies. Her actual age is anyone's guess, however. She appears rather frail and decrepit, this isn't so with her still powerful physical prowess and abilities. These are starting to fail her in old age as she now walks with a stick for support. This aging has caused her to abandon her former position as a formidable warrior. Since then she has discovered her skills in manipulating Weave energy to be more than sufficient in helping others.

Raining Star's skin is rather dark, giving her the appearance of one sharing their blood with Vistani ancestry and her long silver hair is normally plaited down her back. She dresses in simple cotton gowns under a vibrant red robe, which bears the sigil of a full moon under a shooting star.

## Background

Raining Star was born in the rat-infested domain of Richemulot over seventy years ago. Her parents were later victims of the wererats and found herself adopted into the Hospice of Healing Hands in the nearby domain of Valachan. Here, she was recognized for having the skills to become a witch and was thus trained over the following years.

Raining Star developed a good name for the hospice in both healing the sick and smiting evil in whatever forms it takes on. As her skills and rank grew among those about her, Raining Star was appointed the position at the head of the Hospice of Silver Light in southern Barovia in 734BC.

## Current Sketch

Raining Star is still the High Priestess of the Hospice of Silver Light and has taken it upon herself to banish the current High Priest for his insubordination and attempts to undermine her on several occasions. Currently, Raining Star is seeking a possible cure or method of removing lycanthropy from long-term sufferers though she may be destined to fail like all others who have tried she feels that Hala may bless her with this one day.

## Combat

Raining Star is an old woman and prefers not to enter any form of combat or acts of aggression if she can avoid them. If she is forced into combat, she may wield her walking stick as if it were a club. If she has the opportunity, she prefers to fight with her magical *Warhammer* +3 called Star Caller. The weapon has the ability to cast the 1<sup>st</sup>-level priest spell *Faerie Fire* 3 times each day. Raining Star is specialized in this weapon and gains the attack and damage bonuses as normal. Raining Star never wears any form of armor.

Due to her age, Raining Star suffers the effects of fatigue in combat. These effects begin on the fourth round and inflict a -1 penalty to all her die rolls. Raining Star should then roll 1d10 at the start of each successive round, on a 4 or less the penalty is increased by another -1. Once fatigue sets in, Raining Star requires at least 1 hour of rest for each penalty point she has against her.

## Adventure Hooks

The Hospice of Silver Light has the possibility of entering any adventure set in the southern regions of the Core, either as a haven for the heroes, or yet another twist that will catapult them down another path that will inevitably end with something far more terrible than anything they may have faced so far. Though the staff at the Hospice mean well, they may appear to alienate the heroes, this scenario

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has possibilities if the players become suspicious of the staff themselves.

- ◆ A member of staff at the Hospice has been replaced by a doppelganger, dominated by an Illithid or possibly replaced to change in some hideous way. Whilst Raining Star knows this fact, she is unable to ascertain which individual has been altered. If the heroes just stumble upon the Hospice, they may become privy to this information if they prove trustworthy, otherwise Raining Star may summon them if they are already familiar with the place.

- ◆ The Hospice has become the target of vicious rumors that are destroying its reputation. It is possible that the source is a jealous rival of the talents that the staffs of the Hospice possess or something that wants to see them destroyed. A chance meeting with any member of the staff being accosted on the road is a good start as any for the scenario with things getting more complicated as the plot evolves.





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## IMMERABT

### DEATH IS NOT AN OPTION

By: Hugo Viegas Nascimento  
and Luiz Eduardo Neves Peret

An island domain where death is the least of all concerns, not because of what lies after it, but because death itself may be unreachable.

"While anyone might be able to pray for someone else's health and recovery, only the truly faithful are able to heal... for where there is no faith, there is no true healing."

Pierre Verger, "Ewe"

## INTRODUCTION

Most people think of evil beings as those who spread suffering, misery and death, or worse. But of all forms of evil, perhaps none is such as the corruption which has come from a good purpose, a taint on the best possible intentions. This is the tale of one such woman, who is convinced of her benevolence and totally sure of her success in keeping death and suffering away from those she cares for. Death is indeed unable to reach them, but suffering actually thrives in their lives, unchecked and unheeded in Immerabt.

## CULTURAL LEVEL

Late Renaissance (9).

Coal and steam are the basis of most heavy machinery at the city of Inittius. Within the Quarantine Fortress, the renowned Dr. Hemphyll also keeps electrically powered engines and other strange, highly advance devices, storing the energy of lightning or eels.

## LANDSCAPE

Full ecology (Temperate and cold plains, mountains and aquatic).

Immerabt is an archipelago composed of two major islands separated by a span of ten nautical miles of dark, deep waters full of shark-infested coral banks. Smaller islands and rocky banks complete the scenario. The larger, crescent-shaped mass of land, named Unguttas Island, is thirty miles long from north to south and twenty miles across in its widest point. It is sharply divided in two halves, the north side occupied by the highly developed city of Inittius and its surrounding food-processing industries, and the south half covered by farmlands which help feeding the urban population. Mountains named "The Blackrocks" divides the island in two and serves as an endless source of coal, which is used as fuel in the city. The island's moonlike form creates a large eastern bay called Gaol's Bay.

The smaller island, known as Gaol Isle, is just a two-mile-radius rocky outcropping rising from the sea at the same direction of the Blackrocks. The island's only building, a massive construction known as the Quarantine Fortress, is a sanitarium (formerly a prison, hence the isle's name) that covers one-third of the island, with a grove of black dead trees surrounding it from all sides except for the road. This twisted path connects the building with the island's only port. Smaller islands and coral reefs surround Gaol Island, most of them inhabited by seals and seagulls. The sea around this island is particularly dangerous, with high

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tidal waves and hundreds of ravenous sharks. Only the most experienced sailors take the weekly ferry boat between the two islands.

The sky is overcast and gray during the day, with a starless, deep black hue at night. On rare nights the moon will rise among the fog banks. Rain is very common in this place, but rarely strong. The sea remains navigable most of the year, and fishing boats thrive in Gaol's Bay, carrying a variety of seafood to the industries that cover most of the north half of Inittius. The southern farmlands produce bulbous vegetables, like beats, carrots and potatoes, highly appreciated by the locals. There are two rivers in Unguttas Island, the Stankenbahr River, which comes south to north from the Blackrock Mountains, crosses the city and flows into the sea, and the Clearwater River, coming from the southern smaller hills above the farmlands, meeting with the sea just before reaching the Blackrock chain.

Due to highly developed urban draining systems, all city sewage goes into the waters of the Stankenbahr at the last part of its journey, effectively poisoning them. Consequently, most of the northern fish and seafood are poisoned as well. The city dwellers prefer to risk their health this way, though, for they believe their industries and advancing science can protect them from all problems. Besides, the alternative might be even worse: the ever-growing urban population and the food industry supporting it have no safe way of getting rid of their refuse.

The farms hold common domestic animals, while the sea has plenty of life, although most sea-dwelling creatures are either poisoned or mutated by chemical contamination. Most of the seafood is poisoned by the city's own refuse, but the industries take care of it, filtering the toxic residues and sanitizing the products, while sending the toxins back into the ocean and restarting the process all over again. As time passes, both the sea creatures grow more resistant to the poison and the infections they develop become more difficult to eradicate. For this reason there are always new diseases

spreading through the island. At the same time, new mutations are evolving in the dark depths.

In the hills south of the farmlands there are few wild animals, which remain untouched by diseases, as they feed on the southern river's pure water. This may change someday, however, as the new products developed by the industry might be able to remain in the evaporated seawater and poison the Clearwater River on its very source.

Major Settlements: Inittius (pop. 5,000)

## THE FOLK

Population – 8,500; Humans 99%, Other 1%.  
Languages – Immeran.\* Religions – none.

Almost only humans inhabit this domain, mostly fair-haired with light brown or green eyes. Immerans are sturdy, used to recover from sickness many times during their lives. Those who are unable to heal are sent to Gaol's sanitarium for treatment. They rarely come back and visits are strictly forbidden, but most relatives do not really care. Those unfortunate enough to be sent away to Gaol are soon forgotten by their families and friends, for most people will consider them weaklings and unworthy or surviving. Such is life in Immerabt, and no one complains very much.

Sometimes, outbreaks of new diseases are met with unspoken relief, for they work as a "natural selection", keeping the weaker ones away from their food supplies, and they also make replacements necessary in the industries, thus opening more job opportunities at Inittius. People rarely are seen dying, though, because whenever a strong case of disease or food poisoning appears, the healers arrive very quickly and take the person away for immediate care. Sometimes the head of the Healer's Guild, a female alchemist named Dr. Hemphyll, comes personally to oversee the patient's removal. It looks as if the healers knew that a new case of disease was about to erupt, for they are always ready and seem to know exactly where to go. If the case is considered easy, the patient may stay

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and recover, but whenever the Chief Healer arrives, everyone awaits the worst. As people get older, they are more prone to suffer from diseases and poisoning, so the team from Gaol also takes them away. People are so unused to see death that witnessing it would almost certainly prompt a fear or horror check from a native. The local cemetery holds about a dozen ancient graves whose owners have been long forgotten, and there is no permanent caretaker.

About 2,000 people work in the southern farming fields, and approximately 1,000 miners continuously dig the Blackrocks for coal, iron and other resources. Most of the other Immerans are either fishermen, sailors, industry laborers or entertainers of some kind and live in the city. There are less than 150 healers in the entire domain, and most of them take care of local bursts of diseases. Twenty healers are permanent inhabitants of Gaol Isle, working with the worst cases of disease under the direct supervision of the Chief Healer, Dr. Hemphyll. Currently the total of patients under intensive care in Gaol is estimated as a hundred or so.

Inittius is a very advanced city, with three- to five-story buildings instead of houses and very few trees, gardens or parks, since most of the space is used by the local industries. Among the various industrial crafts available, food processing is the leading job area in the city. The city never sleeps, as everyone is supposed to either study or work during the day and there are many forms of nightly entertainment, including taverns, gambling houses and theaters, where fishermen, miners and industry workers amuse themselves together. Due to the excess of people and long-term nature of most jobs, there are a few hundreds unemployed people roaming the streets and alleys, begging or stealing.

## THE LAW

Guild-based republic. The City Council, formed by the leaders of the six Laboring Guilds – Fishermen, Farmers, Herders, Miners, Healers and Industry Laborers – administrates the city and all lands around it. Each guild has a territory

where its influence is more powerful, and each Guild Leader feels that he or she should be the only Lord Governor, but all of them know they would not live without each other's support, so they keep an uneasy relationship.

The farmlands in the south are the territory of the Farmer and Herder Guilds, the Blackrocks are under the supervision of the Miners' Guild and the Fishermen and Industry Laborers take a more direct approach on Inittius' administration. The Healers primarily live in Gaol Isle, but constantly visit the mainland searching for patients. Although some people fear the presence of the Healers, most keep a distant respect for them, knowing all too well that, if not for them, probably the islands would be deserted today. On the other hand, there are rumors of terrible things happening with those who leave Unguttas to stay in the Quarantine Fortress as patients. The Healers do not talk about such rumors and dismiss them as petty superstition and gossip.

Most crimes in Immerabt are quickly dealt with, either solved by mob justice or forgotten altogether, mostly depending on the victim and perpetrator's background. Each Guild keeps its own militia, who are little more than thugs and bullies. Most crimes involve simple theft, burglary, espionage and the occasional beating. Murder, however, is an abhorrent crime and perhaps the only one which receives a harsh punishment: as life is considered the most precious value in this domain, anyone who consciously takes life is seen as a sick person and is immediately taken to Gaol for treatment. Such trips are usually one-way, just as with any other patient sent there.

Under the same point of view, trying to conceal one's disease is also considered a dire crime. In this case, both the diseased person and anyone helping that person avoid treatment are transported to Gaol Isle. The diseased person receives the usual treatment, while those who helped are kept in a specially designed group of cells, where they can see and hear diseased patients all day and night. This is to show them the gravity of the mistake they were making, as

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they might have helped a serious disease spread throughout the entire population. Only a few people exposed to this “educative punishment” ever return to Unguttas. Some become mad with grief and horror, while others “find their calling” and become students under the guidance of the permanent staff. These “repentant criminals” usually become fanatic enforcers of the laws concerning public health.

## TRADE AND DIPLOMACY

Resources – fish, seafood, algae, cabbages, beats, carrots, potatoes, beer, milk, cattle, salt, coal, iron, gold, leather and iron goods, jewelry, ceramic, cloth, furniture, ships, industrial devices, clockwork machinery, medicines, scientific knowledge. Coinage – steamhead (gp), coalheart (sp), spark (cp).

The food industry is the basis for Immeran society. Everything else is considered secondary. Recently, merchant ships from Egertus and Nevuchar Springs have visited the island, and after dealing with the usual language barriers, traders are starting to establish relations with the Guilds. Immerans particularly like foreign beverages in their taverns and inns, as the local soil is not the most appropriate for vineyards.

## CHARACTERS

Classes – rogues, bards, fighters, illusionists, enchanters, transmuters. There are no native divine spellcasters or monks in Immerabt.

Skills – Alchemy, Bluff, Craft (blacksmithing, clockmaking, gemcutting, gunsmithing, leatherworking, locksmithing, stonemasonry, weaponsmithing, weaving), Forgery, Gather Information, Heal, Hide, Innuendo, Intimidate, Knowledge (anatomy, arcana, architecture and engineering, local, nature), Open Lock, Move Silently, Perform (ballad, buffoonery, dance, drums, flute, harp, pipes, lute, melody, mime, trumpet), Pick Pocket, Profession (apothecary, boater, farmer, fisherman, herbalist, herdsman, innkeeper, miner, sailor, scribe, woodcutter), Sense Motive, Swim, Use Rope. Feats –

Alertness, Blind-fight, Brew Potion, Cold One, Endurance, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (firearms), Great Fortitude, Haunted, Jaded, Logical Mind, Unseen, Weapon Focus (rapier, pistol)

## PERSONALITIES OF NOTE

**Claudius Bergamin** (Ari5/Rog5, LE) is the Chief Industrial, leader of the Industrial Labor Guild. He is a rare case in the island’s history, an ordinary laborer who suffered from a terrible scarring disease and was removed to Gaol Isle, but there he was totally cured and was given clearance to return home, ten years ago. His fame spread as wildfire and he quickly took advantage of it, becoming the Chief Industrial two years after his return, and he has kept that position since then, through cheating, blackmail and espionage. He claims to be a “man of progress” and supports every new invention that may help improve the food-processing industry, regardless of any side effects on the environment. His five-year period in Gaol left him more scars than the eye can catch, but he conceals his true motivations as well as his physical scars. He maintains a constant, secret correspondence with the Chief Healer. On the surface, he claims to be very concerned with “his poor fellow patients” who are locked in Gaol Isle, but he actually has even more prejudice against them than the average citizen.

**Dr. Brad Harrington** (Trs5/Alp1, N), a strong, good looking and brilliant man in his late 20s, who has only recently entered Gaol’s elite medical team, occasionally visits the city’s worst places around the seaport, disguised as a sailor and looking for fun. Dr. Hemphyll is concerned for his adventuring trips, but so far she has not said a word about it. There are whispers about the secret reasons behind that and the way Harrington managed to get a position at Gaol’s staff, but no one knows for sure. Aside from him, few Healers do ever visit the local taverns and houses of ill repute, under the pretext that they must keep a good image or must study hard and have patients to care for. The truth is, if a Healer is recognized in a public place, no barmaid or lady of the night will approach him,

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no matter how handsome or wealthy he is. Most people fear that constant exposure to diseases and plagues has made the Healers become carriers of such ailments, or that some Healers are, in fact, eccentric people who like to watch other people's suffering. These "superstitions" are not far from the truth.

## SPECIAL ENCOUNTERS

Immerabt has little natural fauna on land, but the seas around it thriving with fish, seals, aquatic birds and sharks of several species. The constant pollution of the waters has taken its toll (see the "Tainted" template, below) on these animals, creating monsters that most of the population is unaware of. While most such creatures live either in sewers or underwater, some will hide in street alleys and dark corners. Unknown to most people, a handful within the Fishermen Guild are actually weresharks. In the coral ridges, at least one pack of Tainted wereseals hunt for food.

In Gaol Isle, besides the guards, patients (some of whom are madmen) and medical staff, those willing to explore the deepest dungeons may find Dr. Hemphyll's latest creation, the Biomechanical Golems. For those who wish to escape the island, the dead trees in the forest are not as dead as one might hope: one undead treant resides there and feeds on would-be escapees from the sanitarium.

## DARKLORD OF IMMERABT: DR. DOROTHY HEMPHYLL

**Female Human Exp3/Wiz5/Alp7:** CR16, SZ Medium-size humanoid (human) (5ft., 6in. tall); HD 3d6+12 plus 5d4+20 plus 7d4+28; HP101; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd. 30ft.; AC 16 (touch 15, flat-footed 13); Atk +10/+5 melee (1d4+1/crit x3, silvered masterwork scalpel) or +8/+8 ranged (1d10/crit x3, 2 masterwork pistols); SA anti-divine aura, bind soul, contagious touch, create Biomechanical Golem, spells; SQ cat dread familiar ("Edwin"), detect disease, detect poison, improved deathwatch, acid, disease and

poison immunity, regeneration 2; AL NE; SV Fort +12, Ref +9, Will +13; Str 10 Dex 16 Con 20 Int 20 Wis 14 Cha 16.

*Skills and Feats:* Alchemy +23, Bluff +13, Concentration +24, Craft (clockmaking) +13, Craft (locksmithing) +13, Heal +14, Decipher Script +10, Diplomacy +11, Disable Device +9, Disguise +13, Gather Information +8, Hide +5, Innuendo +6, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (anatomy) +23, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Listen +10, Move Silently +5, Open Lock +10, Profession (Herbalist) +10, Scry +10, Sense Motive +10, Spellcraft +15, Spot +10, Use Magic Device +10, Wilderness Lore +8; Alertness, Ambidexterity, Brew Potion, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (firearms), Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (Transmutation), Two-weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse (scalpel). Bonus Formulae: Alchemical Homunculus, Corporeal Purgative, Corporeal Purifier, Emotional Purgative, Quintessence, Regenerative Salve, Tissue Regenerator.

*Wizard Spells per Day:* 4/5/3/2 Base DC 15 plus spell level (17 plus spell level for Transmutation spells). Caster level 3rd.

*Spellbook:* 0 – all; 1st – Chill Touch\*, Comprehend Languages, Enlarge\*, Expeditious Retreat\*, Identify, Ray of Enfeeblement\*, Reduce\*; 2nd – Alter Self\*, Arcane Lock, Blindness/Deafness\*, Bull's Strength, Cat's Grace, Detect Thoughts\*; 3rd – Dispel Magic, Haste\*, Slow\*, Stinking Cloud.

*Languages:* Immeran\*, Draconic.

*Signature Possessions:* ring of protection +2, medallion of natural armor +1, masterwork chirurgery kit (with 20 uses, plus 10 syringes, a jar of leeches and a portable sanguine pump), two masterwork pistols, 6 bullets.

## APPEARANCE

Dr. Dorothy Hemphyll appears to be a woman in her late thirties, short, supple and elegant. People know she is obviously a lot older



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than that, but no one seems to care. Her unblinking, emerald green eyes rarely look at the same point for more than a few seconds. She braids her long light brown hair and wears no jewelry except for a pair of wedding rings in her left hand and a shield-shaped amulet hanging from a chain in her neck. No one notices such things, though, as she usually wears gloves and a high-collar blouse. She dresses simply, a medical gown covering her clothes most of the time. When reading, she wears tortoise glasses. Her voice is melodious and reassuring, although she can quickly change to a professional, imposing tone when speaking to her staff or trying to have something done.

## BACKGROUND

Dorothy Hemphyll was the third child of a wealthy, rural aristocratic family in an unknown, Renaissance-styled world. While her two elder sisters were raised to get married, become mothers and housewives, that prospect did not appeal to her in the least. She wanted to learn about the world, to study and somehow help make things better. Her behavior and attitude enraged her father, but her mother protected her, telling her that she was only a young girl, and someday she would see things clearer and find her true calling.

Her world revolved around studying, playing and experimenting. She was fond of discovering things, and would often ask questions no one was prepared to answer. Most of all, she annoyed the town healer, an old herbalist who was too old-fashioned and too superstitious for her tastes. While she enjoyed the smell of the herbs he carried with him, his words were full of religious beliefs and prejudices she simply could not fully grasp. Her land was not particularly a magical one, but things such as miracles were talked about sometimes. As a girl who would not believe in something she did not see or experiment with, Dorothy could not understand the true meaning of faith.

When she was twelve, her mother became pregnant once again, and that frightened

everyone, because she had become old and fragile. Sometimes the town healer would bring the village priest with him. Dorothy shunned the presence of the man, a person she could only associate with boring cults (“A waste of time at beautiful Sunday mornings”), marriages (“A dreadful prospect for an emerging woman”) and funerals (“Death is the ultimate proof that there are no gods, or at least no good ones”).

When the time came for her mother to deliver, there was a great commotion in the farmhouse. Dorothy was sent out of the room, despite her efforts to stay close to her beloved mother and her confidence that she could be of help with her knowledge of herbs and medicines. The priest said she was unfaithful, and faith was something her mother needed more than any herbs at that time. Her father agreed and kept her away. She whined and cried but to no avail.

Then she suddenly felt a deep coldness running through her own body, and knew something was terribly wrong. Hearing the cries of suffering and the anguished voices of her father and elder sisters, she became desperate. She crashed the door with a chair and entered the room, looking at a scene she would never forget: the healer rocking a small bundle with a crying baby, the priest feverishly praying with his hands stretched over her mother’s limp, pale body, an unearthly light enveloping the bed, her father kneeling before the bed, praying and crying, her two sisters on his sides. Her mother made a slow movement as if extending her hand to Dorothy, her eyes wide open as if fear had taken them, and then she was still. So shocked was the girl that she did not notice the cry of the infant boy mixed with the laments of the adults. She ran to the bed, almost trampling the priest. Her distress was only paralleled by her rage towards the old man, who she blamed for her mother’s fearful last look. She did not spare the child a second look, and never approached the boy again.

Her father had no choice other than to send her to study at the capital, for she rebelled all the time, especially when the family attended



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the meetings at the local temple. With the help of his money and influence, she probably was the first woman to enter the Academy of Sciences and went as far away from religion as she could. She studied hard and was soon respected as a notable academic, although whispered words talked of her eccentric prejudice against traditions and her thorough lack of faith. Her disregard for social life and complete devotion to work were too a source of gossips. She did not live as a recluse, though: she would often disguise herself as a man and visit certain places women of her social stand were not meant to know about. She visited brothels, dogfight arenas, drug parties and several other places where humans debased themselves to a less than animal level. That, she though, was proof enough that there were no gods taking care of mankind, for what god would willingly let its children slowly kill themselves like that?

She first progressed in her studies of herbs and medicines, than another subject caught her eye: true Magic, the Art of changing and manipulating Matter and Life. She was fascinated and the Academy allowed her to take a scientific approach to magic, quite different from the dogmatic, superstitious view of the priests. Then magic opened the door to yet another subject: Philosophic Alchemy. She began to understand the ways of the body and soul in a manner she had never thought before. Her knowledge of herbs and dabbling into magic gave way to a purer form of transmutation, that of the Soul itself. She specialized in curative concoctions and purgatives. She never dared think of creating life, but always wanted to perpetuate life so that she could help others. Deep inside, she felt guilt for not being able to help her mother, and want to make up for that.

One day she met the man who would change her life: Hermann Leawly was a brilliant and good-looking student, of aristocratic birth and with a wonderful future ahead of him. He was impressed with her keen mind and unusual theories about life and health. Soon they fell in love with each other, but Dorothy was unwilling to get married, as that could only be achieved

through a religious ceremony. Hermann could not comprehend her prejudice against priestly affairs, although he found her obsession of maintaining and extending human life quite exciting and intriguing. So they stayed working together against all odds. However, their country held strong familial and religious traditions and soon gossip was spreading in an almost unbearable way. While Dorothy did not care in the least, Hermann's family called him back home, and they forbade him to meet her again except as a bride. The young man complied with his family's wishes, but Dorothy was enraged. She considered him a weak man and decided to dedicate her every waking moment to her work.

A few years later, the country entered a horrible war that lasted half a decade. Dorothy enlisted herself and soon was the head of the medical team, crossing battlefields and tending to wounded soldiers even under the constant threat of attacks. Right after the war ended, a terrible plague spread across her land, killing people faster than new graves could be dug. More people died in the first year of the Plague than during the entire war. By the end of that year, Dorothy was on the verge of completing a new method of caring for terminally diseased people, and decided there would be no better moment to try it. She bought an abandoned penitentiary in a rocky island away from Inittius, the capital, a place simply known as Gaol Isle, and used her money to turn it into a sickbay, receiving patients from all parts.

She recruited a staff of the best healers she could find, but adamantly refused the help of any divine spellcaster. One of the first persons she interviewed was Hermann, and although she was still offended by his perceived weakness, she recognized him as an excellent help. Also, there were a few cases of plague in his family, and he was truly desperate to find a cure.

So they worked together to save people. Dorothy did all she could in order to preserve life, and would hardly admit failure. She grew obsessive and intolerant with her staff, almost whipping them into 24-hour or even longer shifts. Hermann told her she was pushing him

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and the others too hard, but she coldly reminded him of his sick relatives who were already under her care, as well as of who was in charge in the fortress. Her obsessed single-mindedness attracted the attention of the Dark Powers, and the Mists slowly rose from the grounds around the old fortress, patiently awaiting the outcome of her obsession.

After a few months, Dorothy finally developed her new treatment: with series of lightning-powered electric shocks and injections of an alchemical serum of her own creation, she was able to stabilize the patients. Although not a complete cure, it was a way to keep them alive, at least. But then she made a new movement towards damnation: with the help of a few faithful assistants, she transferred those patients who were considered terminal and hopeless to a row of underground chambers hidden deep beneath the fortress, a place where there were originally foul dungeons destined for the worst prisoners. There, she refused to let the terminal patients die, keeping them alive with machinery of her own design and lots of daily serum injections. Soon she was using a continuously pumping device to keep the medicine flowing into their almost dead bodies, and experimenting with blood transfusions and tissue and organ transplants.

She knew that those actions went totally against the religion and were also illegal, but that did not stop her. Her unfortunate experimental patients would spend their rare waking moments screaming and suffering horribly, and would beg her to let them die, but she would pay them no heed, telling the other few assistants that those patients were simply feverish and delusional, so that their words were nothing more than the disease speaking. Hermann was not among those assistants, as she knew he would certainly turn her in. So she told him and the others that she was personally taking the necessary actions in order to destroy the bodies and avoid any further spreading of the disease.

Continuing her research with those patients, she at last was able to isolate the blood

toxins, which were responsible for the plague, and with that she developed a vaccine to cure the disease at its earlier stages and also create preventive immunity. Everybody celebrated and even though Hermann was uncertain of how she had found the cure, he was also quite impressed. The medical staff took a day off to commemorate the triumph, while the nurses treated the sick with the new medicine. Hermann and Dorothy drank together, and as her mind was a little clouded with alcohol, she told him she still liked him a lot, so she would show him her most reserved secret. The drunken man laughed with her and sang songs to praise her beauty, but all that abruptly changed when she took him downstairs to the hidden chambers.

His eyes wide open in disbelief, the feeling of disgust and shock sending away any previously pleasant effects of the beverage, Hermann looked at the pumping machines, the needles and tubes with a luminescent green oil flowing in and out of bodies, which were little more than preserved corpses. He observed the expressions of the eyes, and twice his heart skipped a beat with the sudden scream of a waking patient. When he found one of his own relatives, whom he had thought of as deceased, still breathing but wired all around, it was too much for him, and he tried to break the mechanisms and free those souls, barely noticing Dorothy. She was shocked, too, but by an action she could not understand. She pulled him to her, trying to explain that, thanks to those people, his other relatives would recover, but he harshly pushed her away.

That she would not tolerate, convinced that he was once again showing his weakness. She suddenly thought that, if he knew what the sick felt, he would understand the need for such measures. As he was still trying to come to his full senses, she stabbed him in the back with a syringe containing concentrate serum. Feeling the plague burning him with fever and sapping his strength, he fell squarely on the cold floor. Dorothy left the room and called one faithful assistant to help her set her once beloved colleague in a bed, telling him Hermann had suffered a terrible accident while experimenting

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with a new medicine. She took her time, though, so that when she came back with help, Hermann was already entering the terminal stage of the sickness, beyond her ability to cure him with the vaccine. So she attached him to a pumping machine and, disregarding his howls of pain and supplications for a quick death, she started her treatment on his body. With that, the Mists finally claimed both Gaol Isle and Unguttas Island, creating Immerabt.

## CURRENT SKETCH

Dr. Hemphyll became head of the Healers Guild and was pleased at first, seeing that people finally had taken practical measures to take care of food and health. Even better, upon visiting the capital she discovered that the local cathedral had become an abandoned ruin and been turned into a storage. Finally, priestly miracles were nonexistent and no longer believed. She did not care to explore beyond the two islands, and did not find it strange that the surrounding islands, once plainly visible at least during the day, had vanished into a thick wall of mists. Her home was in Gaol Isle and she thought she would finally settle down and advance her personal researches.

Slowly, though, she realized the truth: the local industries poison the very same products they claim to purify, and due to the small size of the region and an overall tradition of little self-caring, it is virtually impossible to change sanitary conditions in Immerabt. She continuously tries to plan and execute social projects to make people see their own part in the spreading of diseases, but her words find deaf ears, and the constant demand of treatments and researches keeps her quite busy, so that she can no longer practice either magic nor High Alchemy beyond the scope of what she has already developed. Her daily job prevents her from pursuing higher grounds and finding her true goal: the ultimate cure for all diseases and for Death itself.

Also, although she has not grown one day older since she entered the Land of Mists, she longs for a intimate relationship, yet no one

is willing to come too close to her, not even her staff. Physical contact among doctors and nurses is not forbidden but thoroughly avoided. Some people mistakenly believe that she might be having a secret affair with young Dr. Harrington, but in fact she is disturbed by his strong resemblance to herself, in his ways of getting whatever he wants. She also envies his ways of blending with the population and avoiding unwanted attention, while she is a type of unwelcome celebrity. Deep in the sanitarium dungeons, Hermann is still alive and suffering, and she is doing her best to find a more powerful serum, which might cure him and the others, but so far with no success.

## COMBAT

Dr. Hemphyll is a healer, not a fighter. In all her years, she has never killed so much as an insect. However, a few years working in the battlefield and the need for protection, even in the dark streets of her homeland, have taught her of the usefulness of weapons, especially small, easily concealed guns. She has also learned how to wield the scalpel as a fine straight razor, and her knowledge of human anatomy helps her a lot in this matter. She will avoid combat as much as she can, though, and will usually rely on her medical staff, the sanitarium guards or the abominations she has created, to protect her while she retreats to a safer place.

She always carries at least one syringe full of her alchemic soul-binding serum, which ironically is made of a concentrated, disease-ridden extract. Injected in a living, healthy victim, the serum works as a Contagion spell, spreading a disease similar to Demon Fever (Fort save DC 18), but the incubation period is only one minute, not one day, and the victim suffers the full effects of the disease – and must roll the appropriate saves – once per minute instead of once per day.

**Anti-divine Aura (Su):** Dorothy's hatred for divine magic runs so deep in her heart and soul that the Dark Powers granted her this boon: she has SR 21 against divine spells. Also, within a 100-foot-radius centered on her (the size of her

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sinkhole of evil), all divine spells and divinely-granted abilities function as if they had been cast at one level below their normal caster levels. For example, a 5th-level cleric would cast spells and turn undead as a 4th level cleric. This would not prevent said cleric from casting 3rd-level spells, but any level-dependant aspect of her spells would be calculated using the 4th level as the effective caster level.

**Bind Souls (Ex):** Dorothy developed a non-magical technique to bind the soul of any living creature who is in a disabled or dying condition (0hp to -9hp). If she notices that the creature is going to die, she may choose to bind the creature's soul using an apparatus of her own design, resembling a large, cylindrical glass tube, filled with her unique alchemic serum. The creature is first injected with an initial dose of the serum, which stabilizes the condition but does not improve it. The serum grants the creature SR 11 against divine spells. Then the creature's body is attached to a series of copper, bronze and silver pumps and drains, and then sealed in the glass cylinder. The glass device is very delicate (hardness 1 and 2hp). If disconnected from the apparatus, the creature's condition rapidly deteriorates, losing 1hp per minute until death (-10hp).

The creature's soul is bound to the body, helpless and unaware of its surroundings, painfully locked in a neverending nightmare. After a week, the skin becomes blue and after a few months the body suffers from general muscular atrophy. Once per month per Constitution point of the creature, however, the body reacts to the serum and the creature gains consciousness for a number of minutes equal to its Constitution score. The creature is instantly aware of its surroundings and feels the full shock of the pain and the realization of its condition. In most cases, a Madness save is required. The creature is considered helpless. If disconnected from the apparatus during such moments, the serum loses its potency and the creature may benefit from divine spells without having to roll for spell resistance. This is the best moment to rescue a victim.

**Create Biomechanical Golem (Ex):** Dorothy is the only one in Immerabt who knows the secret of creating nightmarish horrors from her terminal patients. Once she has applied her serum to a victim and stabilized its condition, she can bind the creature to a different type of mechanical device, which allows for movement. The creature becomes a Biomechanical Golem (see below) under her orders.

**Contagious Touch (Ex):** Dorothy's extensive exposure to diseases has made her a carrier of the most deadly plagues. Once per minute, she can make her touch act as a Contagion spell. She must make a successful touch attack to infect a victim, and an opponent simply grabbing her is not in danger of being infected. The Fortitude save DC against this extraordinary, necromantic, life-affecting ability is 21.

**Detect Disease/Detect Poison (Su):** Dorothy continuously detects diseases and poisons in a 50-foot-radius.

**Improved Deathwatch (Su):** Whenever a living creature comes close to death, Dorothy receives an intuitive warning of the creature's general direction. After concentrating for a full round, she can sense how close to death all individuals are, in a quarter circle emanating from her and extending up to the borders of the domain. She must concentrate to keep this power active, and can take no other action except for turning around slowly while she feels the vibration. She may discern the direction of a creature fighting off death (alive with 4 or more hit points), and determine the general location within an one-mile-radius area around the creature. When the creature is in fragile condition (3 or less hit points), she may discern the exact direction and reduce the area to a 100-foot-radius around the creature.

**Acid, Disease and Poison Immunity (Ex):** Dorothy is immune to all diseases and poisons, even magical ones. She is not immune to disease-like curses, such as lycanthropy.

**Regeneration (Ex):** Fire- (but not heat-) and cold-based attacks deal normal damage to her.

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## LAIR

Dr. Hemphyll lives in the Quarantine Fortress in Gaol Isle. This is a gothic-style construction, originally a penitentiary, which she bought and transformed to better fit her own purposes, back in her home world. A staff of 20 elite Healers, mostly experts and/or wizards with deep knowledge of anatomy, alchemy and healing, follow her every instruction to the letter, and students constantly come and go, as the Fortress also serves as Medical Academy. The Healer's Guild keeps a small troop of warriors to take care of the sanitarium grounds and prevent patients from leaving without permission.

This place currently houses about 100 patients and (unknown to most staff members) about 250 patients who should be dead, but are kept alive against their own will, as experiment subjects. They are kept in a secret facility under the sanitarium, where the deepest dungeons cells used to be. Most are unconscious or comatose, their twisted faces reflecting their endless nightmares. A few, however, are conscious and quite aware of their surroundings. Dr. Hemphyll has created strange apparatuses to extend the lives of near-death patients, using an alchemical serum of her own design, making blood transfusions and organ transplants. Those few fortunate enough to die serve as organ donors. Sometimes, when running short of a specific organ, Dr. Hemphyll makes still-living patients unwilling organ donors or, even worse, have some of them become "organ storage facilities", transplanting and accumulating extra organs into their bodies to keep such organs fresh and usable.

Most of the patients locked in her private lab are kept in glass containers full of serum, but some are attached to mechanical devices that allow movement. These abominations serve as "assistants" to Dr. Hemphyll during her "special surgical procedures", and may act as bodyguards should she need them. See the "Biomechanical Golem template" for more.

The dread atmosphere of the sanitarium, tainted with endless pain and suffering, usually keeps it a rank 3 sinkhole of evil.

## CLOSING THE BORDERS

When Dr. Hemphyll wishes, clouds darker than usual circulate around the archipelago, with strong winds and heavy rain showers making it nearly impossible to leave, either by ship or through the air. Ravenous tainted sharks and other animals patrol the waters, searching for easy prey. The lord rarely closes the borders, however, for she wants to keep contact and scientific correspondence with other lands, as well as improve overseas trading.

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## TEMPLATE: TAINTED CREATURE

"Tainted" is a special quality granted by constant exposure to the highly toxic chemical waste from the food-processing industries and mineral-purifying process in the mines. It is not uncommon to find a Tainted animal or dire animal in the sewers (usually rats or vermin) or swimming in the seas north of Unguttas Island (mainly fish and seafood). In a rare event, a human may acquire the Tainted special quality if directly exposed to toxic waste for a long time. Ingesting food created from a Tainted animal does not grant the special quality, but the person ingesting such food must make a Fortitude save or suffer from a disease effect similar to that of a Contagion spell. The DC, type of disease and incubation period are chosen by the DM. Please refer to the Dungeon Master Guide for more information on diseases.

The "Tainted" template can be applied to any animal, beast, fey, giant, plant, humanoid, monstrous humanoid, shapeshifter or vermin (referred to thereafter as "base creature"). After a month of direct physical contact with the toxic waste from Immeran industries (such as with fish swimming in polluted seawater), the creature must roll a Fortitude save (DC15). The DC increases by one for every additional month of exposure. If the creature spends a month away

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from the toxic waste, the DC returns to 15. Creatures who fail their saves receive the following changes:

**AC:** Natural armor increases by +1.

**Attacks:** The Tainted creature retains all its attacks and receives bite and two claw attacks, if it did not have them. Creatures without hands or paws (such as fish) gain only a bite attack. These attacks cause damage according to the table below:

Size	Bite	Claw
Fine	1	—
Diminutive	1d2	1
Tiny	1d3	1d2
Small	1d4	1d3
Medium-size	1d6	1d4
Large	1d8	1d6
Huge	2d6	1d8
Gargantuan	2d8	2d6
Colossal	4d6	2d8

Special Attacks:

The Tainted creature retains all special attacks of the base creature and also gains the following:

**Acid Breath (Ex):** breath weapon, line of acid, 5ft. high, 5ft. wide, 30ft. long, damage 3d4 acid, Reflex save DC (10 + ½ Tainted creature's HD + creature's Con score). Usable once per day.

**Poison (Ex):** bite, Fortitude save DC (10 + ½ Tainted creature's HD + creature's Con score), initial and secondary damage 1d4 Con.

**Disease Touch (Ex):** touch, Fortitude save DC 12, usually transmits filth fever (see the DMG). At the DM's discretion, other diseases might be transmitted through this attack.

Special Qualities:

The Tainted creature retains all special qualities of the base creature and also gains darkvision with a range of 60ft., acid resistance

10 and a circumstance +4 bonus to Fortitude saves against poison.

**Saves:** Same as base creature (see above).

**Abilities:** Change from the base creature as follows: Str +2, Con +4, Int -2 (minimum 1), Cha -4 (minimum 1).

**Skills:** Same as base creature, checking for changes due to new ability scores.

**Feats:** Same as base creature.

**CR:** Same as base creature +2.

**Alignment:** Usually evil; otherwise same as base creature.

## TEMPLATE: BIOMECHANICAL GOLEM

The Biomechanical Golems are creations of the amoral, twisted mind of Dr. Dorothy Hemphyll, Lord of Immerabt. These were once dying people who were exposed to the secret alchemical serum of her design. The victim of such treatment becomes a not-dead, not-living abomination under her orders.

“Biomechanical Golem” is a template that can be added to any living animal, beast, fey, giant, plant, humanoid, monstrous humanoid, shapechanger or vermin (referred to thereafter as “base creature”). Even though Dr. Hemphyll usually experiments only with her human patients, she might be willing to test new formulae and equipment in other creatures. The creature type becomes “construct” and it undergoes the following changes:

**Hit Die:** Changes to d10. The creature must be between 0 and -9hp in order to be alchemically and surgically turned into a Biomechanical Golem. The number of HD returns to the original, but now they are all d10, without any Constitution modifier. The creature loses most memories of its former life, and class features, spell-like and supernatural abilities are usually lost, except for a few unusual cases.

**AC:** Natural armor increases by +2.

**Attacks:** The Biomechanical Golem retains all natural physical attacks of the base creature, and receives two claw attacks, if it did not have



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them. These attacks cause basic damage according to the table below (add Strength modifier after calculating):

Size	Base Damage
Fine	1
Diminutive	1d2
Tiny	1d3
Small	1d4
Medium-size	1d6
Large	1d8
Huge	2d6
Gargantuan	2d8
Colossal	4d6

## Special Attacks:

The Biomechanical Golem retains all special attacks of the base creature (except class abilities, supernatural and spell-like abilities) and also gains the following:

**Breath Weapon Device (Ex):** the machines attached to the Biomechanical Golem allow it to produce a small amount of some substance that can be thrown forth as a breath weapon. Depending on the nature of the Construct and the way it was created, the breath weapon device can be placed in the creature's head, one of its claws or some other area of the body. The device can create up to three uses per day, with a period of 1d4+4 rounds between uses. The Reflex save DC is equal to 10 + ½ construct's HD + construct's Dex modifier.

The weapon always produces a single type of attack, chosen by Dr. Hemphyll at the time of the creation:

*Acid* – line, 5ft. high, 5ft. wide, 30ft. long, damage 3d4 acid.

*Steam* – cone, 15ft. long, damage 3d4 heat.

*Poisonous goo* – line, 5ft. high, 5ft. wide, 30ft. long, initial damage paralysis for 1d6 rounds, secondary damage paralysis 1d4 hours.

*Sleeping vapor* – poisonous cone, 15ft. long, initial damage sleep for 1d6 rounds, secondary damage sleep for 1 hour. The effect is similar to

the spell of the same name, but affects creatures of any HD.

**Constrict (Ex):** If the Biomechanical Golem can successfully grapple an opponent, it can constrict, dealing additional crushing damage per round, equal to the Construct's normal claw damage.

**Improved Grab (Ex):** If the Biomechanical Golem hits an opponent with both claw attacks, it can attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity (see Grapple, page 137 in the Player's Handbook, and Improved Grab, page 9 in the Monster Manual) and constrict (see above).

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## Special Qualities:

The Biomechanical Golem gains the Construct type. It retains all special qualities of the base creature (except class abilities, supernatural and spell-like abilities) and also gains the following: darkvision 60ft.

**Resistances:** the Biomechanical Golem has acid resistance 20 and SR11 against divine spells. It also has either fire, cold or electricity resistance 20. As with all constructs, it is immune to poison and diseases.

**Saves:** As a construct of the same HD.

**Abilities:** Change from the base creature as follows: Str +4, Dex +2, Int -8 (minimum 1), Cha -4 (minimum 1). As with all constructs, it has no Constitution score.

**Skills:** The Biomechanical Golem retains none of the base creature's Intelligence-based skills. It receives a racial bonus of +4 to Listen and Spot and a +8 to Climb and Jump skills. The creature's height is not a limit when attempting to jump. However, due to the noise produced by the machinery attached to its body, it receives a racial penalty of -4 to Hide and Move Silently skills. It is not much of a problem, since this creature is not subtle in its attacks.

**Feats:** As base creature.

**CR:** As base creature +2

**Alignment:** usually neutral evil.



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## INCITATUS

### SOMETIMES, MAN'S WORST ENEMY IS MAN HIMSELF

By: John Kristian Spangberg (The Stoic)

Hubris gets the better of  
a scientist...

"Pride goeth before  
destruction, and a  
haughty spirit before a  
fall."

— Proverbs 16:18

Mankind is known as the most expansionistic, thriving and industrious race. The race of man makes progress in the name of many causes. Some are justified; others are not. Not all progress is for the benefit of all. In these cases, mankind learns from its mistakes...or do they?

Incitatus is a tribute to mankind's folly, pride and inevitable self-inflicted downfall. Now a desolate domain, it travels throughout the Mists as an Island of Terror, superimposing itself on coastal domains, appearing as one of the islands there. The domain stays whether or not it is taken notice of, only to travel on after a while. The time spent in a domain varies, and it appears and disappears when nobody watches. Sometimes it might even venture beyond the Mists. When Incitatus comes back, will anyone have taken the bait?

#### CULTURAL LEVEL

Ahasveros' island used to be in the Classical (4) era, but due to disuse, it is now a Stone Age (0) city, if such a term could be used. There are still signs of the former civilization, but it is a sad testament indeed.

#### LANDSCAPE

Incitatus consists of the island of Misenos. The island has a city also called Misenos with a small rural landscape around it. Rolling, grassy hills and deciduous trees are the norm. Small cottages of white and grey stone dot the countryside, as if there are still people living there. The weather is generally warm and sunny, but even so, something seems amiss even if it isn't evident that there are no people around. People would also expect livestock grazing in the fields, with goat herders tending their flock. The streets of Misenos are desolate and enshrouded in a veil of fog. The air is completely still here. An unnatural silence permeates the surroundings. The buildings are made of stone, and there are small parks around the city. If the sun could get through the fog, Misenos would be a magnificent sight.

#### MAJOR SETTLEMENTS

Cities: Misenos (pop. 0)

#### THE FOLK

Population : There are no inhabitants in Incitatus.

Religions : There are some temples in Incitatus, but none of them are in use.

#### THE LAW

Formerly an Oligarchy, now an Anarchy. Ahasveros never had any plans to rule Misenos, and neither does he have any subjects. The occasional traveler or creature that comes

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into Misenos is not his to command. There are no laws here, and even if there were laws, there wouldn't anyone to uphold them.

## TRADE AND DIPLOMACY

Resources - Lead, iron, marble (none of these are used).

Coinage – None currently in use.

Trade in and with Incitatus is nonexistent.

## CHARACTERS

Classes: There are no native characters from Incitatus.

## THE LORD

Men of great talent are often those to take the hardest fall. The Darklord of Incitatus has watched civilization after civilization decay, but has never been able to do anything about it, even if he wanted to. Ahasveros (a- HASS-vur-oss) is his name.

Ahasveros was once the greatest scientist of his civilization. This civilization has now been almost forgotten, but the remainders of it are still on the island. Misenos was once a very advanced society in many ways, and exceeded its contemporaries tenfold. Ahasveros would change all this. He lived in troubled times. His city's enemies coveted their progress. Ahasveros was a respected man, and advised the elders to refuse all claims from the enemy.

"Better to be at war, than to lose our position as the greatest nation in the world", he said. The Council of Elders agreed with him. He knew that his fellow scientists and the artists were jealous of their crafts, thus they agreed with him. The general populace did not, however. They were the ones commanded to fight, not the scholars. The war was inevitable, and soon to be a fact. The situation remained at a standstill for long, but by putting his head together with the rest of the scientists, Ahasveros would soon come up with his greatest achievement: The Adamas theory. By harnessing the forces of the sea, an enormous

tidal wave would destroy the enemy fleet and even their harbors. Ahasveros' discovery turned the tide of the battle, his city gaining the upper hand. He was richly awarded, but this wasn't enough for him.

He thought the war didn't draw towards an end soon enough. Lives could be saved, material costs cut down and his own fame increased even further. He explored the possibilities of enhancing the strength of the tidal wave. His assistants protested against it, claiming it was too dangerous. Ahasveros would have nothing of it. He was the inventor, not them. His assistants were dismissed. He would do the job by himself, and he would succeed. His hubris had overcome him. He continued his calculations in his tower, but cut the time length of it, due to his ever- growing impatience.

When the enemy fleet came that fateful day, a storm was brewing in the distance. Ahasveros harnessed the powers of the sea with his machine, and saw his brainchild develop into a colossal wave. He was ecstatic, and danced around in his tower looming over the city.

Unfortunately, in his madness, he lost control of the wave, which was drawing nearer to the tower. His last vision was of the wave crashing over his beloved Misenos, drawing close to him. His last feeling was remorse.

## Current Sketch

Misenos' enemies thought the city had sunk, because no trace of it was left. The truth is wholly different. The city was wrenched away, placed in the Domain of Dread by otherworldly forces. Ahasveros is now a bussengeist, trapped in his tower overlooking the city, which now lies in ruins. The only other building to escape the wrath of the tidal wave is the temple to the sea god. This building is an immense shrine with pearls and amber covering the marble structure.

Ahasveros still regrets the day his city was destroyed, but he can't decide whose fault it was. He blames his associates for abandoning him. In reality, he shut them out. He blames

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himself for his miscalculations, a fact that could have been avoided, had he taken his time. He has been a Darklord for a while now, and has seen a lot of other domains over the years. Most of his inventions are damaged, and he can't repair them, and most of them he cannot use anyway.

However, he can use his telescope. By using it, he can see longboats from an unknown land. He can feel this land degenerating, just as the ones who used to be there before. He doesn't understand his situation. The concept of him being trapped is not apparent, as he's never tried to escape from his tower. The city below is too frightening. All those lands he has seen over the years have led him to believe the world outside is much larger than it really is. His inactivity and role means that his domain will neither be released nor truly settle down in a cluster. The entire city of Misenos equals a site with Ethereal Resonance of four, although Ahasveros' tower is only a rank 1 sinkhole of evil.

## AHASVEROS, DARKLORD OF INCITATUS

### Male human rank two ghost (bussengeist)

Expert12: CR 14, SZ M Undead (incorporeal) 5 ft. 8 in., HD 12d12, HP N/A, Init, Spd fly 30 (perfect), AC N/A, Atk N/A, SA Aura of despair (Su), Ghost Writing (Su), Phantom Shift (Su), SQ Immunities (Ex), Ghost in the Machine (Su), Blessing of Misenos (Su), AL NE, SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +4, Str -, Dex 14, Con -, Int 17, Wis 10, Cha 20.

*Skills and Feats:* Alchemy +18, Disable Device +19, Diplomacy +14, Heal +15, Knowledge (Engineering) +20, Knowledge (Local) +13, Knowledge (Nature) +20, Listen +12, Search +13, Spot +16; Alertness, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Alchemy), Skill Focus (Disable Device), Skill Focus (Engineering), Skill Focus (Nature).

*Languages:* Miserian.

### Appearance

When Ahasveros chooses to appear (which he seldom does), he appears as he did in life. He appears as a man in his middle-40s, with curly, black hair and beard flowing down to his back and chest, respectively. He is dressed in a crème-colored robe with a white toga underneath. His expression is a sad thing to behold. His deep brown eyes were once full of life, evident of the genius that possessed them. Now they are full of gloom, and the corners of his eyes seem wet, as if he's crying.

### Combat

Ahasveros was never a warrior, and neither is he now. He was, and is, a scientist, simply put. In his society, scientists were of the elite, while the commoners were the rank-and-file. In death, this hasn't changed much, although he seldom meets anyone. He is the sole inhabitant in Misenos. The streets are empty, which usually is quite unnerving on would-be visitors. Should anyone reach his tower, he is unable to enter physical combat. He tries to scare people away using aura of despair and

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ghost writing. His body cannot be harmed in any way.

The only way to destroy Ahasveros is by destroying the Adamas machine, which secures his life force. The lanterns in the sea god's temple must be lit, and a prayer in his name must be uttered. Special Attacks: Ghost abilities: None of the ghost abilities demand DC checks.

**Aura of Despair (Su):** Those near Ahasveros are afflicted with a deep apathy and melancholia that makes action difficult. All within 50 feet of him must make a Will save. Those who fail suffer a -2 morale penalty to all attack rolls, skill checks and saves. The negative modifier lasts until the victim leaves the radius of this power. Those who pass their saves cannot be affected by Ahasveros' aura for 24 hours.

**Ghost Writing (Su):** Ahasveros can cause words to appear on any touched surface. The appearance of the script is of a flowing, elegant script in his native language. He may also draw sketches or schematics. He may single out people, or let the writing be visible to everyone, as he chooses. He may let the writing last for two days, or he may let it vanish before the elapsed time. There is no limit to the amount of ghost writing Ahasveros can have in existence at one time.

**Phantom Shift (Su):** Ahasveros can make the ethereal resonance of Misenos become visible and tangible to those within a 60-foot radius of him. They then may see the city of Misenos as it was before or during the cataclysm. The experience is normally not harmful, but those faint of heart may find it disconcerting.

Special Qualities:

**Immunities (Ex):** As a bussengeist, Ahasveros is immune to all harm, magical or mundane. He may not be turned, nor has holy water any effect on him.

**Ghost in the machine (Su):** The Adamas machine is the key to Ahasveros' existence, and in order to utterly destroy him, the machine must be destroyed. To destroy it, 15 points of structural damage must be dealt to it, or a player must succeed at a Disable Device check at DC 25.

**Blessing of Misenos (Su):** After the machine is destroyed, the lanterns in the sea god's temple must be lit, and a prayer for Misenos and Ahasveros must be uttered. This must be done after the machine is dismantled, or else nothing happens. If this is done, Misenos will be submerged, and restored to the place where it came from.

## Closing the Borders

When Ahasveros wishes to seal his borders, those trying to cross the border feel an urge to seek comfort. They can do nothing but remain helpless against this unexplainable feeling. Characters of good alignment mourn over the foolishness of mankind (and their race, if demihuman). Those of non- good alignment feel a deep sorrow over their shortcomings in life. Comforting each other will not make the misery feeling go away, so they will have to turn around in order to reach other people.

## ENCOUNTERS

Misenos was once a vibrant city, known as a paradise to all of those who came to trade here. The surrounding countryside had an abundance of strange creatures hardly known anywhere else.

The sole permanent inhabitant of the island now is Ahasveros himself. However, this does not mean that it is always empty. The Mists have a way of placing creatures where there was



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none before. Most of these have the Mists subtype, but other monsters are also possible.

## Adventure hook:

An unknown island has appeared in one of the civilised domains, and the cartographers are very interested in mapping it. Merchants have heard rumors that there is a city upon the island, and they are interested in new goods.



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## THE LOST WIZARD'S TOWER SOMETIMES LOVE MAKES THINGS WORSE ...

By: Luiz Eduardo Neves Peret

A wizard's tower ruled by  
the deceased master's  
familiar.

### Introduction

Few emotions run deeper into the heart than the feelings of a wizard for her familiar. In Ravenloft, this love and care are twisted on the part of the creature, for the dread familiar lives to fulfill its master's deepest desires but also wants some loyalty from the master in return. A dread familiar usually does nothing to endanger its master, but on the rarest occasions, the jealousy and desire may overwhelm the creature and transcend its own evil character, leading it to unspeakable actions, even for a dread familiar. Now, if the familiar hails from a land outside Ravenloft, then it does not even have the excuse of being a "born evil" creature to justify its deeds.

### Cultural Level

Savage (0), with vestiges of a Renaissance (9) culture.

### Landscape

Full Ecology (Temperate Forests and Hills). There is a vast forested valley around the Tower, surrounded by low mountains. Anyone approaching will see the old building emerging from a low hill among dark treetops. The Tower itself is a Medieval building reformed to Renaissance style, with large windows on its five floors, and a garden full of lifelike statues of various types, most of them humanoid females, sporting clothes and equipment from different places and cultural levels.

The Tower and its grounds have fallen in disrepair since the owner's disappearance. The lands around the Tower included many farms, currently abandoned as well, except for a few farm animals running free. The forest is dark, silent and forbidding, inhabited by wolves and wild boars among many smaller animals. The trees cross and entangle their twisted branches to block the meager sunlight from the bushy, thorny plants below. White mists cover the forested lands day and night, but the farmlands are still clear enough so that the sunlight can melt the fog during the day.

Legends of those few who survived a visit to the Tower tell of dark dungeons and strange laboratories full of traps and unknown apparatuses, a vast library, unimaginable treasures and unspeakable horrors, including ghostly apparitions of female humanoids speaking different languages or wailing in pain. Most of those who ever make it out of the forest are so shocked, however, that most people pay no any attention to their babbling words.

### Major Settlements

None. The Tower and its surrounding lands are the only inhabitable buildings in this domain.

### The Folk

None. There are no humanoids in the vicinity of the Lost Wizard's Tower, only farm animals in the crumbling farms and wildlife in the surrounding forest.

**The Law:** No formal government.

### Trade and Diplomacy

Resources (not exploited): timber, fruit, wheat, wild corn, iron and precious metals. Coinage – none, although gold, silver and

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copper coins of a strange, unknown coinage can be found scattered in some places, normally inside the Tower.

**Characters:** none.

## Jinx

### Darklord of the Lost Wizard's Tower

**Male Familiar (Cat):** CR 14; SZ Tiny Magical Beast (1 ft. long); HD 12d8+12; HP 36hp; Init. +7 (+3 Dex, +2 improved initiative); Spd. 30ft.; AC 33 (+2 size, +3 Dex, +4 necklace, +7 natural, +7 luck), touch 28, flat-footed 30; Atk: +15 melee (1d3-2, 2 claws), +10 melee (1d4-2, bite); SA: rake 1d4, charm master, spell-like abilities; SQ: darkvision 60ft., improved evasion, low light vision, master of the tower, speak with master, speak with felines, SR17; AL NE; SV Fort +16 Ref +18 Will +13 (all w/ +7 luck bonus); Str 6, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 18.

*Skills and Feats:* Alchemy +7, Balance +15, Bluff +10, Climb +7, Hide +11, Listen +8, Move Silently +11, Sense Motive +8, Spellcraft +11, Spot +8; Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse (claw, bite).

*Signature Possessions:* necklace of protection +4 (as ring).

## Appearance

Jinx is a well-fed black short-haired cat with a white spot on his face and another on his chest. He has light, gleaming blue eyes and an intelligent expression. He always wears a silver necklace with his name engraved, a gift from his original master.

## Background

Jinx is a familiar, a magical beast summoned by the powerful alchemist and transmuter Margaret Landsdale a long time ago, in her first years of practice. She lived in a fairly advanced world and was a very nice and generous person. In her land, despite the cultural progress, black cats were still seen as bad omens in superstitious tradition. However, Margaret was a woman with a modern point of view, and when she first met the creature she had summoned as a companion, she was delighted with his beauty, and called him Jinx, as if to

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prove that names and looks did not mean anything. She usually referred to her companion as "Jinx, my lucky charm".

Margaret became a famous hero in her homeland, quickly growing in power and wealth, along with her adventuring friends. She was also a hard worker and never stopped her pursuit of knowledge of all things arcane. Her reputation as alchemist became almost equal to her fame as adventurer. She was the closest to a true scientist that her world had seen, always experimenting with new formulae and spells. With her savings, she bought a crumbling ancient tower and remodeled it, equipping the place with the best laboratory facilities money could buy. She also stocked a vast collection of books, and even opened a small school to teach the local children to read and write. Her hospitality and generosity were widely known. When she finally settled down, her fame had attracted a small community of farmers who volunteered to work for her. She was just as good a landlord as she had been a hero.

But alas, for all her charity and goodness, she sometimes left Jinx alone while taking care of others in need. He felt lonely as any pet and companion would, but initially he understood, up to the limit of his intelligence, that his master was a good human, a person who helped others.

Then, Margaret started a new experiment, trying to enhance intelligence and reason in animals and other creatures. She thought the best test subject would be her beloved cat, as he would surely benefit from the results. She had grown too bold and self-confident to think that something might go wrong.

She gave Jinx an alchemical formula of her own design and put him inside some strange apparatus she had invented. After long hours of testing and a few days of continuous observation, it appeared to her that Jinx was really developing a degree of intelligence beyond what his bond with her had granted him so far. He had already been able to speak with her for a while now due to their mystic

connection, but his cognitive senses and his logical coherence seemed a lot clearer. He was still unable to communicate with humanoids besides her, though.

The cat had successfully had his intelligence enhanced, as she had foreseen, but the experiment had a dire side effect. With his new senses, Jinx noticed more deeply how much his master had expanded her horizons beyond her life with him and he began to imagine how insignificant he must be to her. Instead of feeling grateful for the favor she had just done to him, he believed she had been so uncaring that she had chosen him as a subject because she did not care if any unexpected side effect made him sick or even killed him.

Even worse, Jinx became jealous. He had a deep connection with Margaret, one that transcended the relationship between a woman and her pet, or even a relationship between a wizard and her familiar. As his intelligence increased, he felt he truly loved her and wanted her for himself only. But more and more she seemed far away, involved with charity when not performing a new ritual or devising a new formula. Jinx grew bitter and reclusive, looking for ways to gain his master's attention and care once more.

When the region was attacked by a horde of barbarians, Margaret once again armed herself with spells and, gathering her best warriors, marched forth to battle. Jinx accompanied her as usual, but this time, instead of keeping distance from combat, he took active part in it, taking advantage of his enhanced intelligence and the guerilla tactics he had learned from years of adventures besides his beloved master. He helped ambush more than two dozens of enemies, served as a vessel for Margaret's spells, spied on the enemy camp and used common felines as associates. He did all he could to prove his value.

Despite all this, however, Margaret's heart was already taken. She was attracted by a young fighter, who reminded her of her own first years of heroism. He was also attracted by the

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mature and wise, yet still quite vibrant wizard. The local society approved the affair, for their culture cherished their elders very much. Only Jinx did not like the idea, but no one asked for his opinion,; even Margaret took no time to explain the facts to him. She simply entered the war council one night, hand in hand with the young warrior, and together they announced their upcoming marriage.

In the middle of the festivities, Jinx was incensed with anger and jealousy. He devised a plan to get rid of the fighter during an enemy ambush and, being the scout of the warrior's division, lead the soldiers to their deaths. He managed to escape and brought back the grim news, concealing as much as he could his happiness.

Instead of returning her attention to her familiar for solace, however, Margaret was torn apart with sadness and desire for revenge. She was not yet skilled enough to bring her beloved back from the dead, nor there was any spellcaster in the region, arcane or divine, with such powers. Unable to make her fiancée return to her, she decided instead to send all enemies to the other side at once. She created a powerful and deadly formula, one that would destroy the entire barbarian army in a single explosion.

Jinx feared for his master's life and accompanied her during the decisive battle, as she personally delivered the potion through the battlefield. Using deadly spells, she coldly shoved enemy warriors around as if they were dolls, turned them to stone or made them drown in the magically softened stone floor below their feet. Jinx followed her close all the time, but she barely noticed him, so blind she was with fury. She did not even notice when he attacked one barbarian who would have hit her from behind. The cat grew angry with her once again, seeing that she was being careless just because of her feelings for a dead man.

She finally set the potion in place, in a soft spot in the soil, from where the resulting explosion would force a massive earthquake and the collapse of the entire camp. Suddenly, the

leader of the horde attacked her. Jinx tried to stop him, but was easily cast aside by the enraged barbarian. Margaret's spells protected her from most of the damage the savage caused her, but even after she finally struck him unconscious, she was too hurt to move, and unable to run away. Jinx, also hurt by the attack, approached her and tried to pull her away, but to no avail.

Margaret said, "My lucky charm, you should leave now. My only regret is that my beloved warrior left this life before me, but now I'm comforted by the fact that I will be meeting him soon."

Then Jinx's heart grew cold. In her final moments, her words of love had been to that man, not to him! He grinned and told her the truth. As Margaret's eyes widened in shock, Jinx said how he had hated the warrior from the first moment, how he had planned to attract him an ambush at the first chance, and how he laughed inside as he informed her of the news about her lover's death.

"But why?! What has he done to you?" she asked.

"He has taken my heart's desire from me, and he should pay for that. And you, you used me for years, used my love and devotion. You gave me this gift of reason and the curse of knowing how much you will never love me as I loved you. I could drag you away from this; you could make me strong enough to do so if you just concentrated enough. But you prefer to leave this life and join your lover on the other side. You would not only sacrifice me, but also your army, just to join that man. So this I tell you: you may come to him, but you shall not see him, and you shall not see my death." Saying that, Jinx scraped Margaret's eyes with his claws. While she wailed in pain, Jinx ran away as fast as he could, leaving the battlefield just as the potion exploded in a burst of fire and magic, disintegrating the enemy camp.

Jinx ran day and night, always followed by the echoes of the explosion and Margaret's

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wails of pain and sorrow. He could not sleep, fearing nightmares. He was unrepentant, yet he feared something, either divine retribution or the vengeance of a ghost. When he finally returned to the tower's lands, he noticed that all people had apparently left the place in a hurry. He cautiously searched the area for signs of the invaders, but found none. That night, the Lost Wizard's Tower entered the Misty Border.

## Current Sketch

The Tower has drifted through the Misty Border for an unknown period of time. Jinx seems to be ageless and has little need for food. He sleeps as little as he can, still fearing nightmares. Sometimes the domain will anchor itself to the border of another domain or land long enough for travelers and explorers to come by.

Even though he feels terribly lonely, Jinx hates humanoids, respecting spellcasters but considering all others only useful as servants or cannon fodder. Whenever a group of humanoids enters the domain, Jinx observes them from a safe distance, trying to discern their motivations. He then looks for an arcane spellcaster, preferably female. He desperately wants to try again, to establish a relationship with a female wizard, to replace Margaret. If he cannot find a female wizard, he then looks for a sorcerer, or a male arcane spellcaster. As a last resource, he will try to make friends with a bard. If the chosen spellcaster already has a familiar, Jinx will try to subtly get rid of the creature.

Jinx has a strong personality and is a charming creature. He will humbly approach his chosen one, trying to prove himself useful. He guides adventurers through the fields, shows them the best ways to avoid attacking animals, and leads them through the first floor of the Tower, preferably taking non-spellcasters to mundane riches to attract their attention. Then he will try to detach the chosen one from the group and show the way to the library. With luck, the chosen one will want to stay for a while and perhaps try to perform the binding ritual to make Jinx her familiar.

The problem is, besides having been too lonely for too long, Jinx is also too jealous and self-centered. He will try to keep the master around all the time and to isolate her from the rest of the group. He will even charm her and try to convince her that the others either are unworthy of her attention and should be shooed away, or are untrustworthy, greedy and traitorous and therefore should be eliminated.

Jinx is doomed to destroy any relationship he establishes with a potential master. Even if bound by a familiar-binding ritual, he is unable to leave the domain. The Dark Powers have enhanced his powers but have not granted him any way to effectively control his master's mind, actions and, most of all, feelings. He eventually will provoke his potential master's death, but most of the time, when he finally realizes that there is no way to keep the master as he dreamed of, Jinx prefers to eternize his would-be master by turning her to stone. If he turns another character to stone, he usually breaks the statue as soon as he can, so that only his "beloved master" stays to decorate his lair. He can try to attach himself to a master after one week has passed from his former master's demise.

## Combat

Jinx will try all he can to avoid direct combat, but will use his powers to incapacitate foes or anyone threatening his newly chosen master (see below). If directly threatened, he prefers to escape and lead pursuers to some old deadly traps scattered through the Tower.

**Rake:** if Jinx hits with his two fore claws, he may try to start a grapple. If he gets a hold, he can rake with his hind claws for 1d4 points of damage.

**Charm Master (Su):** Whenever a wizard or sorcerer establishes a link with Jinx, she opens her mind to his powerful influence. Jinx can affect his current master's mind at will, as if using a Charm Person spell cast by a 12th-level sorcerer (Will save DC 20). He usually takes



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advantage of this power to isolate his master from her friends.

**Spell-like abilities:** Jinx inherited the spells his master, the transmuter and alchemist Margaret Landsdale had prepared for the great battle she fought on her last day. He can activate each of them as a standard action, with no need for components whatsoever. The Dark Powers have enhanced some of these spells, so that Jinx can use them more than once per day. Each spell-like ability functions as a spell of the same name cast by a 12th-level sorcerer. Saves, when applicable, have a DC of 20 (22 for Transmutation effects, in italics).

*At will* – Detect Magic, Detect Poison, Detect Thoughts, Ghost Sound, Open, Close.

*5/day* – Cat's Grace, Charm Person, Expeditious Retreat, Grease, Jump, Obscuring Mist, Reduce.

*3/day* – Dimension Door, Dispel Magic, Fly, Haste/Slow, Pyrotechnics, Ray of Enfeeblement, Stinking Cloud, Stone Skin.

*1/day* – Confusion, Polymorph Self, Telekinesis, Transmute Rock to Mud, Transmute Mud to Rock, Control Weather, Flesh to Stone.

**Improved Evasion (Ex):** Jinx has kept his improved evasion ability from the time he was Margaret's familiar. He has this ability whether or not he is currently bound to a master.

**Master of the Tower (Su):** Jinx can command any door, trap (magic or mundane) or trap door originally built in the Tower, as a standard action. He can open, close or lock doors with this ability. Any door locked this way is treated as if under an Arcane Lock spell cast by a 12th-level sorcerer. He can use this ability to arm or disarm the original Tower's traps but not traps build by visitors.

**Speak with Master (Su):** Jinx has the ability to speak to any master bound to him, regardless of the master's actual level. This otherwise functions as the familiar ability of the same name.

**Speak with Felines (Su):** Jinx has the ability to communicate with any feline animals, domestic

or wild, at will, as if by the means of a Speak with Animals spell cast by a 12th-level cleric.

## Lair

Jinx has claimed the Tower as his lair and may be found wandering through its corridors and dungeons at any time. The Tower is a level 2 sinkhole or evil, level 3 when Jinx is trying to approach a new master and get rid of her friends.

## Closing the Borders

Jinx does not consciously close the borders of his domain. However, when he is pursuing those who are trying to escape, his strong emotions usually trigger a mystic reaction within the borders, summoning the Mists to surround the entire domain. Anyone crossing the Mists at this time may leave the Lost Wizard's Tower but will be lost in the Misty Border. When the Mists part, the domain has moved to some other random place.



# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## THE NORTHLANDS

By: John Kristian Spangberg (The Stoic)

A cold-temperate domain  
with an even cold-hearted  
jarl.

"Better gear than good  
sense  
A traveller cannot carry,  
Better than riches for a  
wretched man,  
Far from his own home"

- From Hávamál (Sayings of the High One)

A wise ruler consults with his men and weighs his decision before his edict is done. He will do wisely in listening to his elders and forefathers, and perform his actions in their name. A mistake made by him is a mistake made by them, for it was they who raised him. The Jarl of the Northlands has brought shame upon his name.

### CULTURAL LEVEL

The southern part of the domain had nearly reached the Chivalric (8) culture stage before it was dragged into Ravenloft, but has now stagnated at the Medieval (7) stage. The northern part is descending as well. Formerly an Early Medieval (6) society, it should now be considered a Dark Age (5) realm.

### LANDSCAPE

Full Ecology (Temperate forests, hills, mountains, plains and swamps)

The Northlands is a varied domain, ecology-wise. It has hills and mountains in the

north, where the sun never sets in the summer, but leaves the land dark and cold during winter. Deep fjords cut through the landscape, imitating claws. Here, the aurora borealis is seen as a beneficent omen during this period, as it helps people forget about their lot in life, at least for a while.

In the east, the area called Esterled, the mountains give way to plains and swamps. Save for the city of Retrograd, few people live here, as they are afraid of the bog lands. In the south, the plains continue all the way to the shoreline, with patches of forest dotted along the way. Harnisk, also called Harnisch by the southerners, was a place of commerce and trade, and could have been a large city today, possibly even a new capital, if ill fate had not struck the land. Guadaña is the southernmost of the larger settlements, formerly a hub of science and culture.

The sea stretches along the entire western part of the domain. The sea has two states; when the tide is high, it is stormy and treacherous; when the tide is low, the sea grows to an eerie calm. Due to the flux, people in the south have built dikes, and the northerners have built breakwaters along the coast. When traveling the land, as they seldom do any more, the people feels time pass quicker than it used to. Something is definitely amiss, they say. In truth, time passes normally, but the land shrunk when transported to Ravenloft.

The Jarl, Gravstein Hansen, thinks he owns more land than he really does, and is delighted. Traveling by sea is risky. Quick movement is required, as time does not allow one to dawdle.

### MAJOR SETTLEMENTS

Cities: Miklaborg (pop. 4000), Retrograd (pop. 1000), Harang (pop. 500), Harnisk (pop. 400), Bammel (pop. 200)

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Schreckenhügel (pop. 600), Guadaña (pop. 700)

## THE FOLK

Population : 12, 500. Humans 94%, Dwarves 2%, Elves 2%, Half-elves 1%, Other 1%. Languages : Nornish, Dwarven, Elven. Religions : Misericordia, Wutan Pantheon.

The Kosti tribe in the north is a fair folk, sporting blonde or red hair with blue or green eyes. Southerners are generally of Kosti descent, but there are a few people with black or brown hair. Some of these have brown eyes. Men normally grow beards or moustaches, which they braid. The women braid their hair in two pigtails, which hang loosely down their shoulders.

The inhabitants live in houses made of stone or wood. Longhouses are a common sight in the earldom, as most people live together in large families. The majority of people on the countryside make their living by farming, woodcutting, fishing or hunting. A combination of fishing and farming is quite common in the northern parts, as the soil isn't fertile enough to support them alone. People in the cities are mainly artisans, laborers or craftsmen. Many of these are former merchants or innkeepers who have turned to other occupations in order to support themselves. People from the hamlets around the earldom wear clothes made of wool, fur or hide. Some of the finer town dwellers have gotten used to finer fabrics, but now that trade has shut down, it is hard to come by clothes made of silk, linen, ermine or cashmere.

Most Kosti have been raised in a strict, puritanical religion. The faithful gather in three forms of temples: small stave churches and meeting houses in the north, and slightly larger churches in the south. The Kosti formerly buried their loved ones in burial mounds, but now they are buried in graveyards and cemeteries. Dance, drink and music are only used on festive occasions. When the Kosti have a fyraften, or celebration, it truly is a momentous occasion. Archery contests, axe hurling, dance, music and many other things abound. The older Kosti try to

impress the younger ones by telling sagas from olden times, as ancestors play a vital part of Kosti life.

Kosti folk are proud. Insults, whether real or perceived, are seldom forgotten, and even rarer do they forgive the insulter, unless he makes amends. The most trivial insults are solved at fyraften by using normal contest. More serious insults call for duels. The most well known form of duel is holmgang. The duelists face each other from a different side of a headland, breakwater or even a log. More trivial insults are fought with quarterstaffs; the more serious offences are dealt with using deadlier weapons, usually swords or axes. Often, but not always, enemies make amends before the fight.

Most of the older customs from the ancient pantheon's days have been abolished, but a few remain. One of these is the blodhevn, or blood feud. If a person kills another person, the family demands retribution, i.e. the killer's head on a plate. One of his relatives, most likely his or her eldest son, will try to kill the murderer. The murderer's family may then try to kill his murderer, and so on. The jarl tries to curb this bloodshed, but has had little success, as he has with his other tasks. At larger battles, the Kosti grow even more bloodthirsty, which is why they have gained their reputation. They have little patience for weak opponents, and go to battle gleefully with weapons raised and bellowing cries and war chants. Some of the Kosti use herbs, mushrooms or even toadstools to ease their pain and become more ferocious. These Kosti are always those who follow the old ways, worshipping the old Wutan pantheon. They call themselves berserkers or wolfserkers, and use furs from these animals in order to attain their strength. (Treat this as a barbarian rage used by a barbarian of equivalent level.) Some of these take this a step further: they attain contact with the animal and become seiðmen (seiðth- men). (Treat as if they were taking levels as sorcerers.) The Jarl's hatred of the seiðmen has not just made them craftier. Adventurers wandering in the Northlands are more likely to find magical items than most of the other places in Ravenloft, but at least eight

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out of ten will be cursed, due to their spiritual wrath.

## Deities in the Northlands:

### Misericordia:

Symbol: Bell in laurel wreath  
Alignment: Lawful Neutral  
Portfolio: Piety, purity, obedience  
Domains: Healing, Law, Protection  
Favored weapon: Light mace

Wutan Pantheon:

### Wutan

Symbol: Eye surrounded by runes  
Alignment: Chaotic Good  
Portfolio: Magic, wisdom, luck  
Domains: Death, Knowledge, Luck, Magic  
Favored weapon: shortspear

### Thonor

Symbol: Hammer and lightning bolt  
Alignment: Chaotic Good  
Portfolio: Battle, strength, weather  
Domains: Air, Healing, Destruction, Strength, War  
Favored weapon: warhammer

## THE LAW

Hereditary despotism. The head of the Kosti people governs the earldom. His name is Jarl Gravstein Hansen, also known as "the brutal". The Jarl controls his lands with an iron hand in a steel fist from the fortress of Miklaborg ("great fortress") in the city of Miklaheim ("great home"). The black fortress is situated on a fell overlooking the city. Without looking closely, one cannot separate the castle from the mountain, as it is nigh impossible to see where one ends and the other one begins. A big waterfall runs down the mountainside.

In the right moonlight, the citizens swear the water changes color into red. The Jarl is also represented in the villages, where he is represented by a lensman, who works as the highest authority. Laws are either decreed by the

Jarl, his lensmen, or develop themselves as a custom. A lagman, or law mender, writes down the laws as soon as they get a foothold in society, thereby codifying the laws. The Jarl can change these if it fits him.

Most crimes have a severe penalty. The worst of these is used only on seiðmen, which the Jarl despises, and people involved in blood feuds or illegal trade (i.e. without paying taxes). The prisoner is tied to a breakwater when the water level is low, and left there to drown. Few dare help their unfortunate kin, as the Jarl always posts guards in the vicinity. His men, normally stern and stoic, burst out laughing as the doomed person takes his last gasps of air. Thus, it has become known as the laughing death.

## TRADE AND DIPLOMACY

Resources - Herring, mackerel, salmon, cod, beer, mead, elk, cattle, sheep, dairy, wool, peat, barley, wheat, reindeer, flour, timber, lead, iron, Coinage - mark (gp), penning (sp), bracteate (cp).

The Northlands is not a domain of trade anymore, although it once was. The people are proud and distrustful, but once a friendship is made, it is made for life.

There are plenty of ex-merchants who still have some of their goods in store, so finding supplies is not necessarily a problem. An innkeeper keeps his Saalhus (the Kosti word for tavern) open to everyone, merchant or otherwise, and many of these doubled as merchants in earlier times. Many of the Saalhus are abandoned today, and there are many stories of how the owner left. See the biography of the Jarl for further details.

## CHARACTERS

Classes : barbarians, bards, clerics, fighters, rangers, rogues, sorcerers.

Skills: Appraise, Craft (carpentry, leatherworking, shipmaking, weaponsmithing), Intuit Direction, Handle Animal, Knowledge (local, nature), Perform, (chant, drums, fiddle,

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flute, lur, ode, storytelling), Profession (brewer, farmer, fisher, herdsman, lumberjack, miller, sailor), Ride, Wilderness Lore.

Feats : Back to the Wall, Cleave, Courage, Great Fortitude, Haunted, Improved Critical, Run, Toughness, Weapon Focus (any sword or axe), Voice of Wrath.

## THE LORD

Gravstein Hansen is both the political ruler and the Darklord of this domain.

### GRAVSTEIN HANSEN, JARL AND DARKLORD OF THE NORTHLANDS

#### Male human Barbarian 2, Fighter 8

CR 11, SZ M 6 ft. 1. in., HD 2d12+6 (barbarian) + 8d10+24 (fighter) HP 74, Init +6, Spd 40, AC 16, Atk +13/+6, SA Rage (1/day), Uncanny dodge (Ex) SQ Curse Pole Target (Ex) AL NE, SV Fort +13, Ref +4, Will +2, Str 16, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 12.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb + 10, Intimidate + 6, Handle Animal +4, Jump +5, Ride +9, Wilderness Lore +3; Cleave, Expertise, Improved Initiative, Improved Bull Rush, Mobility, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Ride), Sunder, Weapon Focus (Greataxe), Weapon Specialization (Greataxe)

*Languages:* Nornish.

*Equipment:* Cursed greataxe +2 of berserking, hide armor.

## Appearance

The Jarl is a burly, gruff man, more so than other Kosti. He seems to be in his 50s now, and has yet to have an heir. He sports the usual Kosti style of hair and beard, but both are black, not the normal fair color. Curiously, neither his beard nor his hair have greyed the slightest bit since he was young. He dresses in furs and tanned leather, with a red tunic underneath. He wears woolen trousers, held up by a leather belt with a gauntlet motif on the clasp, crushing something that resembles a key. On his feet are sturdy leather boots.

His nature is apparent in his manners, speech and looks, for he is not a ruler by heart nor brains. His strength lies in brute force. He will never be the type of ruler his father was, and he knows it. The problem is, he never wanted to be like his father, who Hansen always thought was a coward. Deep down, he wants his subjects to love him, but it is not obvious in him. Diplomacy, fairness and greatness will never be associated with his name.

## Biography

In the ancient days of the Northlands, then known as North Carten, the Kosti revered a plethora of gods. Another tribe also resided here. This people were known as the Gand. The two tribes were scattered across the districts, and they were bitter enemies. Hakon Silvertongue, the first Jarl of the Kosti, managed to gather all of these districts into a single earldom, but this had its fair share of problems. The capital to-be of the realm, Miklaheim, was a constant battleground. Without a proper capital, the land would not be able to be a working nation, and both of the tribes were dependent on it to survive. Only by distributing wealth as they themselves saw fit could their own tribe be safe, and the economy of the country would stabilize. They couldn't share the city, and they couldn't live as two people in one city. The Gand Chief, Aeric Redtooth, came with a controversial solution. They would divide the city, ruling it by turn, and use it five years at a time. After five years in the wilderness, the tribe would be famished, but they would need to make war no more. There was a compromise, and the two tribes both became nomads. The Kosti were a fierce people back then, and the only way of trade they knew was by looting. Their pillaging made them a feared people. On one of these trips, they reached a country with a new faith.

The Kosti were sceptical at first, but finally turned to the new religion. A few stuck with old customs, but not one of them were threatened to do otherwise. This transformed the Kosti, who saw that there were more things to do than rob, steal and loot other countries.



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Trade blossomed, and their neighboring countries welcomed their longboats. Jarl Hansen's father, Jarl Hans "Trade mender" Kostifostered, saw how vital the trade was, and during his first period of rule in Miklaheim, he encouraged the sailors to develop a trade guild. He saw this as a key to the prosperity of Northern Carten, and suggested it be named so. The guild masters originally thought the Jarl would name it after himself, but decided to go along with his wishes. It was named "The Key" and used a symbol of a black and golden key.

"The Key" was a huge success, and North Carten grew richer, bigger and more powerful than ever, and both tribes prospered. The Guild demanded a huge toll from those who weren't members. More and more lands decided to join "The Key", and some of them even became the subjects of North Carten, which now became known as The Northlands. Jarl Kostifostered had a son, who he called Gravstein.

Gravstein experienced the sharing of Miklaheim. As he grew, his dislike of the concept grew as well. As he was old enough to understand it, his father, who was originally of Gand blood, explained why the city was not theirs to keep for all time. Gravstein was incensed that his father would allow such foolishness, and swore that he would make Miklaheim his, and all of the Northlands with it.

After his father's death, he wanted to gather all the means he could, so that swords could be made, and mercenaries paid. Those were the only things he would pay for during his first period in Miklaheim as the city's ruler. The Kosti villages started to wither, just like the Gand hamlets. A traveler would not have seen the difference between the two peoples when it came to misery. By using the accumulated funds, the Jarl quickly defeated the starving Gand tribe.

When the city gates opened after the allotted five years, the Gand thought they would be let in. It was to be their doom. The next thing

Hansen did was to burn every Gand hamlet down, which was even easier than the battle at Miklaheim.

When the last hamlet was burnt, he then vented his fury upon the seiðmen, who had won a lot of supporters and converts during the recent years. These became an increasing threat to him and his rule. The Jarl and his men barred every village gate that could be a nest for the unbelievers. Gravstein was not a religious man, but he used the help from the church to crush the seiðmen, which he knew would please the church. In doing so, the Jarl became the high protector of the church. Little did the bishops know that in all secrecy, Gravstein used more from the church's money than his own, which he was starting to run out of. To cover this, he began taxing "The Key" until it nearly collapsed. This was a small feat, considering the famished and poor villages, which couldn't deliver goods to the guild anyway. The church realized what was going on, but then it was already too late. By turning his back to the seiðmen, Gravstein turned his back to the past. By turning his back to the church, Gravstein turned his back to the present. By turning his back to "The Key", Gravstein turned his back to the future.

## Current Sketch

The Jarl spends most of his time in Miklaborg, where he spends hours every day training and improving in the one art he appreciates: War. He is a fine swordsman and strategist, but no diplomat. Affairs of the state has never interested him, but he won't let his advisors help him in any way.

Hansen is simply too proud of himself to do so. Thus, his once glorious earldom is crumbling steadily. What his ancestors used years building, Hansen brought down in less than a lifetime. Speaking of his ancestors: his father wasn't named Kosti-fostered for nothing. He was adopted by his predecessor, who, like Gravstein Hansen today, had no heir. The reason for this was an old favor. Only his mother was a full-blooded Kosti. This fact has eluded the Jarl, but he has seen some signs of it, particularly his



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hair and beard. The courtiers have surmised it, but haven't told the Jarl, fearing his wrath. If he could, he would go out on a major-scale conquest, but none of his scouts report any lands nearby.

Remnants of the Gand tribes are still around. A member of this dying people has raised a niðstang (niid-STANG) against the Jarl. A niðstang is a horse head set on a pole, used as a curse against someone who has committed a grave error. Usually this rune-engraved pole is set in advance as a warning, but the Gand seiðman made this pole after Gravstein had finished off the last Gand hamlet...or so the Jarl thought. The brief version of the curse is as follows: "Unless all the land of the Gand is returned to them, Gravstein Hansen will never be the true ruler of the Northlands".

## Combat

Anyone who tries to fight the Jarl had better come prepared. He is always accompanied by his elite guards, and is not a bad combatant himself, despite his years. He would rather have his guards finish any intruders off, but will join in happily if it suits him. He is an expert axe man, and few can defend themselves in single combat with him. When Gravstein joins the fray, most of his soldiers leave the fight if they can, due to his cursed axe. Some stay, fearing his wrath more than their own death.

Special Attacks:

**Rage (1/day):** This ability works as used by a 2nd-level barbarian. See the barbarian section in the Player's Handbook for further details.

**Uncanny Dodge (Ex):** The Jarl, because of his nomad background, has the ability to react to danger before his senses would normally allow him to do so. Gravstein Hansen retains his Dexterity bonus to AC regardless of being caught flat-footed or struck by an invisible attacker. He still loses his Dexterity bonus to AC if immobilized.

**Curse pole target (Ex):** All of the Jarl's checks based on Charisma, except Intimidation, fail. Even Intimidation checks will fail if they are used to further the Jarl's role as a ruler. Should he die, his successor will receive the curse instead. The successor will be aware that something is wrong, but it will take one week before he knows the reason. If the successor has the Leadership feat, it will become defunct.

## Closing the borders

When the Jarl wants to seal the borders, a wall of chanting spirits descends from the heavens and blocks the border. Although they are spirits, they are substantial, and there's no way of passing through them in any way. The spirits are of dead Kosti, Gand and others who feel that their land has been taken from them. The spirits will not attack, but they are dressed as if going to battle. Should anyone try to fly over them by some means, they will throw weapons in the air, thus blocking the trespassers. To anyone watching, it will seem as if the weapon hit the trespassers only just. Digging under the wall will result in the excavation of the bones of the spirits' bodies, which would be quite unsettling.

## ENCOUNTERS

The Northlands has a normal type of fauna as expected in a temperate climate. Normal types of predators, such as bear, wolf and lynx are the most common. The church has lost a lot of its power after the Jarl's decimation, and have therefore used extreme measures in order to keep their faithful ones. Strange new customs in order to shelter themselves from nature have been introduced.


After the Northlands came to Ravenloft, these prophecies have come to fruition. This has led to the fact that the church's flock of faithful worshippers has increased, but traveling the land has become more dangerous. In the mountains near the coast, jettegryter (YEAH-tuh-gruh-turr), or giant potholes, have been found. The Kosti believe them to be pots used by ogres and dread trolls, and so it has come to be. In the waterfalls,

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the fossegrim play their fiddles. The fiddles of nixies and drownings can be heard over the small ponds of the Northlands, and the mills shelter the mill snarls, which sometimes disrupt the process of making flour or lumber. Across the plains, deildgaster, or boundary ghosts walk around carrying hot coal for trying to steal land from their neighbors in life. Other undead also plague the land. In fear of their children being a changeling, a child's parents sometimes are involuntarily responsible for an utburd (OOT-bird) (see The Book of Sacrifices) are found near poor villagers, and the draug, or doomed fisherman, sails the coast in a small half boat to prey on the people lost at sea.

Curiously, the sea seems at first glance to be the most normal area in the realm. It hosts normal fish, whales and other animals, except for the increasing amount of octopi around the coastline. Some of the fishermen claim these octopi had teeth instead of beaks, but most of their peers say it's an old sailor's tale.

## Adventure hooks

- ◆ From Retrograd, a lone ranger by the name of Pori has traveled out on one of his regular bear hunts. This popular giant of a man has not been seen in many days, but there seem to be a greater rate of berserkers in the area than before.
- 
- ◆ The PCs travel in the southern part of the domain, where they enter the town of Schreckenhügel. Despite its small size, its church has an impressive pipe organ. Strange things start happening in Schreckenhügel, and the PCs try to solve the riddle. The culprit is the organist, who has gone deaf from the immense sound of the pipes. The truth is he's only deaf for a limited period due to self-inflicted deafness spells.
  - ◆ In the North, the remembrance menhir of the first Kosti Jarl, Hakon Silvertongue, has shown signs of tears running from the plaque. There is also strange things afoot near another holy site. Here, the weary Hakon Silvertongue drove his hand into the ground after his final battle, only to find water. The water is said to have powers of healing, but is now disappearing.

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## OLYMPUS

### THE GODS MUST BE CRAZY

By: Luiz Eduardo Neves Peret (Lord Arijani)

A classic-styled domain,  
where petty and greedy  
fiendish creatures pose  
as gods, and the one man  
who would be a hero and  
savior of the oppressed  
people is actually the  
darklord.

DISCLAIMER: The following article is not related whatsoever with the WotC product "Deities and Demigods" and is just loosely based on ancient Greek mythology. The creatures posing as "Gods" cannot even be considered pale reflections of the true Olympic Gods.

"For even though some  
misguided souls might  
worship them as gods,  
this they certainly are  
not... however powerful  
they might be, no more  
and no less than daemons  
of the darkest kind, are  
these foul and  
mischievous spirits "

--Sprenger and Kramer,  
"Malleus Maleficarum"

When common folk suffer under the yoke of tyranny, they sometimes turn to the gods for guidance and relief. But when the gods themselves are the source of oppression, there is little hope left. Then sometimes a hero rises from the sea of depression and lightens up the hearts and souls of those who suffer, bringing hope back to their lives. When this hero is just as evil as the gods, however, everything may be lost.

This is the legend of Olympus, a land where creatures posing as gods walk among men and abuse them at any chance, and the people's hero is no less than the darklord.

### A Long Time Ago, In A Land Far, Far Away...

There once was a fair realm, unfortunately ruled by unfair tyrants. Hordes of commoners were work in the fields, tend to the herds and harvest all goods not for themselves but for their rulers, members of the high priestly caste. Said to be the voice of the gods themselves, seven high priests had stepped forward from their ranks, establishing a rigid and complex administrative system, where favors, bribes and blackmail were commonplace and the true commands were given at rushed voices behind silk curtains. Outside the inner ring of clerical nobility, few people held any power, and thousands of peasants were herded and treated as animals, moaning under the lash of their taskmasters.

For centuries, the Seven Voices of the Gods had been the ruling caste over the entire continent. Generation after generation, the same families simply exchanged favors and sent their children to one temple or another, so that a given generation might have one priest of one deity and the next might be under the service of another, without losing their positions. Their religious roles were merely traditional, as the gods seemed oblivious to any prayers and granted no spells nor made any miracles. If the gods ever heard any words spoken to them, either by the regular, appointed priests, or by the oppressed masses, no god had ever answered.

Life in the country was split among the rule of the Seven Houses, who had organized all of its aspects by the reflex of each deity:

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The priesthood of Zeus, Ruler of the Skies and King of the Gods, ruled all administrative matters, and traditionally held a little more power than the others, although such power was mostly on paper only;

The priestesses of Athena, the Wise Lady, held educational matters, promoting the development of the financially gifted and keeping the masses ignorant, by letting them study just enough to understand who ruled and read their edicts;

The priestesses of Aphrodite, Queen of Love and Lust, arranged marriages among the powerful families and with other prominent people that might either be worthy allies or present a risk of any type, to ensure their cooperation. They would also promote bacchanals in order to promote debauched behavior and thus guarantee loyalty through blackmail and intrigue;

The priesthood of Hermes, Lord of All Ways, controlled both domestic and international trade, at the same time secretly organizing the local thieving guilds and rings of smuggling and drug-dealing. They were in charge of providing the Seven Houses with rare and imported herbs, powders, smokes and potions, as well as deadly or mind-influencing poisons;

The priests of Ares, the Great General, controlled the army and navy, as well as all local militias, turning a blind eye to the dealings of the priesthood of Hermes, and at the same time bullying the peasants into harder labor;

The priests of Apollo, the Master of the Sight, were counselors and advisors, often making extravagant appearances to “divine the future”, therefore dictating courses of action to rich and poor alike, for the right price. They were also in charge of all festivals and artistic activities, censoring any form of expression that might be considered a threat to the established *status quo*.

The priests of Hades, Lord of the Dead, were responsible for the caretaking of those who died, and of those who were ill. Secretly, they were directly responsible for some of the eventual epidemic that weakened or even killed part of the popular masses when they reached certain large numbers.

The population worked hard, but their masters were never satisfied, and pushed them ever harder. Some of them prayed, asking the gods for a hero who would help them, a strong and brave man that would lead them to freedom, just as Hercules, the legendary hero and son of Zeus who protected the weak and always helped those in need, had confronted so many evils in the epic times. But the gods seemed oblivious to their prayers. Even then, they prayed harder at each new torture, at each new strike from their lords.

This was the way everything worked for several generations. One day, though, the son of the High Priest of Zeus, a bold and brave young man, began to speak aloud the fears, frustrations and hopes of the commoners. Although the nobles were shocked and disdained his words, the masses heard him gladly, nicknaming him “Hercules”, considering more than mere coincidence that he was the son of the High Priest of Zeus himself.

This young man was as intelligent and charismatic as he was physically strong, having proved himself several times in the arena, and that just added to his legendary image before the eyes of everyone. He knew of his father’s deceptions and of the extensive ring of blackmail and intrigue the Houses had woven around them. The boy was disgusted of his father’s deeds, and sometimes he defied his father’s power and decisions in public, more and more winning the hearts of the poor masses.

Even though the young hero was seen by the commoners as a spark of hope, his continuously unheeded pleas for justice and charity, in a system that had kept corruption at its peak for centuries, and the growing dissatisfaction that resulted, finally began to take

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their toll on his heart. He realized that fair play would not help him achieve his goals, and, slowly, he began to believe that, if he was going to win over his father and his corrupted peers at the political arena that was theirs by right, then he would have to use the same weapons they used.

The heir of the Priesthood of Zeus continued to play his facade of good-hearted, brave and sometimes ingenuous hero, speaking aloud to the spectators in the arena after each victory, trying to get the attention of anyone that had any influence. Behind the curtains, however, he began to play the same games and perform the same dirty tricks his rivals had been doing for the last decades, collecting blackmail material, seducing maids into telling him secrets, and sometimes outright bullying officers and scribes into performing services for him. He repeatedly told himself that the ends justified the means, and that, once the Seven Houses were down, he would be able to cleanse the government and society from all corruption.

But even those methods proved too slow for his tastes, and he started to work more actively towards the aim of overthrowing the Houses and taking over the government. For such purpose, he began to hire and train a group of rebels, taken both from the strongest among the populace and any soldiers or gladiators who didn't like the system as it was. They started small riots, testing their skills.

The Houses were not deaf and blind as he might have expected, though. The High Priests had spies all over the country, and they eventually learned of the plots against them. The priest of Zeus felt somehow proud that his son had finally been shown to be just as cunning and clever as himself, and was not just a bored brat that had nothing better to do and found amusement in defying traditions, as the young man had been taking pains to appear in public. At the same time, nevertheless, the Head of the Council of Seven was quite angry and, having determined that his own son was a poison ivy needing to be cut down, asked his colleagues for advice. Meanwhile, he made his own move: claiming to want a truce with his son, he

presented him with new bracers, with the insignia of a lion's head, symbol of power. Unbeknownst to the young hero, his father had the bracers enchanted with the blood of a monster, to make him lose his temper and reason during the heat of battle, so that soon he would either lose his rebel followers' trust or kill them himself.

The priestess of Athena, a very intelligent and dangerous woman, feared not only by her political power but also for rumors of her dealings into dark and forbidden arts, had been long studying ancient scrolls and revealed to the Council the finding of a powerful summoning and binding spell that would bring an outsider entity to the Material Plane and enslave it to the will of any group of fearless people who dared join hands and perform the ritual, giving a blood sacrifice in exchange for the entity's services. She planned to have the Council bind the creature and make it crush the revolutionary army before it could become too large, thus proving once and for all that the Houses were, indeed, the Voices of the Gods.

At the same time, the perverted priestess of Aphrodite sent a beautiful servant to a false trap by bandits, in order to let Hercules save her. She wanted the hero seduced and tamed, eventually having him be found in a compromising scene with the maid on "holy ground", in the main temple of Zeus. She knew that such a sacrilege would prove the young man an atheistic heretic and the superstitious masses would no longer believe in his image of hero. Secretly, she wanted him to be the sacrifice given to the dark entity, to ensure the power of the council, crush the rebellion and, at the same time, get rid of the high priest's only heir.

The Council approved both plans and immediately set them in motion. The Priestess of Athena started the preparations for the ritual during the next full moon, while the maid was saved by the hero from the clutches of the "bandits". Hercules was ecstatic by the girl's beauty and apparent innocence, and fell deep in love with her.

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What the Council didn't expect was a turn of the events: Dejanira, the servant girl chosen to seduce the hero, was swayed by the his kind words and good deeds, and genuinely fell in love with him, eventually telling him the truth after a few weeks of secret affair.

Hercules felt betrayed by his own father and, to a lesser extent, by the woman whom he was in love with. Instead of seeing her confession as an act of love, he considered her a traitorous seductress, as the priests had originally planned her to be. He played the role of the sympathetic, understanding hero, but deep inside he burned with rage and evil plans.

He told her that they should do as the priestess of Aphrodite had planned, meeting at the temple of Zeus, on the exact night of the ritual, because the Council would make arrangements for them to enter the place, and thus the rebels might find it easier to infiltrate the place. He planned to take over the government by murdering the Seven as they performed the ritual, which he did not believe was going to work. By this time, the Mists extended their tentacles to the temple grounds and the lands around them, feeling the dark outcome of the mutual betrayal.

On the night of the full moon, even though the House of Ares had provided a full garrison to guard the temple, the Priestess of Aphrodite arranged for one secret door to left open, just to let the couple enter the temple. The rebels followed their leader and his consort into the underground tunnels. As the ritual began, the priests sent a small troop to the tunnels to catch the hero in a delicate moment. They met only their own deaths in the labyrinth.

The sounds of battle attracted the attention of the rest of the army, and dozens of soldiers ran to investigate. Hercules avoided them and brought the maid to a hidden spot behind the curtains, as they watched the seven evil nobles join hands and start the chanting. Although Hercules did not believe in magic, he was surprised to see the dancing lights around the seven and hear the cracks of thunder

suddenly roaring outside in the skies that were open just moments before. Even then, he believed it to be some kind of trick.

The battle in the tunnels moved to the temple. Soon the ground was bathed in blood of rebels and soldiers alike, with shouts of rage and screams of pain echoing everywhere, at the frightened sight on the helpless and weakened council members, now fully surrounded in magical flames and sparks.

Suddenly, the ruler's son appeared from behind the curtains, dragging the surprised and terrified slave girl along with him. She pleaded for mercy, declaring her genuine love for him, and asking for the compassion he had promised so many times he would have. He looked her in the eyes and said, "I know you love me. I love you too, but I love power more. I will rule above them all." Then he drove his sword through her chest, and shoved her body into the midst of the circle of hands. His own fellow rebels were shocked by his sudden display of coldness, not very much different from what the heads of the Houses were used to do.

As her blood poured from the girl's body, something apparently went wrong with the ritual. The entity never fully entered the world, but its consciousness and essence was split among those in the circle, driving them mad with pain and the sudden burst of energy. As they stood helpless, Hercules ran into their midst and swiftly hit his father with raging fury. The elder man looked at him, befuddled by pain, pleasure, ecstasy and the contrasting sensations of gathering power and waning of his life. He whispered a few words only his son could hear in the middle of the roaring magic storm, and passed away.

At that very moment, the magical energies concentrated into a single spot in the middle of the circle, and then suddenly exploded. The seven joining hands in the circle, including the dead man (as they could not pull their hands away), were brutally disconnected, all of them vanishing from sight along with the father's murdering son and his other victim, and



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those soldiers and rebels fighting around them were simply incinerated by a tremendous wave of unholy fire, and therefore no witness remained of those events outside that inner circle.

When the hero and the six remaining priests awoke, each one was alone in a different area of a new land, yet one that seemed strangely familiar to all of them. Also, they found out that something had... changed, not only in the lands around them, but more important, something else within each of them had changed. That is how the Gods came to walk among mankind and the domain of Olympus was formed.

## Landscape

Full ecology (Temperate Forests and Hills; Cold Mountains; Warm Aquatic). Olympus (o-LIM-pus) is a vast expansion of land, comparable in size with Vorostokov, surrounded by a warm sea with several islands, either isolated or in archipelagos. Coral reefs cover large areas around some islands, making sea travel somehow dangerous to the inexperienced. The main land is mostly covered by forests and farmlands, with high, white-peaked mountains towering the edges of wide valleys. Some areas in the extreme south are volcanic, marked by barren lands and deep precipices around Hadespit.

The center of the domain is crossed by major, well maintained and heavily traveled roads, which meet at the city-state of Windydale. The routs suffer from a fall in trading movement only when the troops from the eternally power-struggling region of Nikopolis, in the west, try to invade neighboring regions. Such invasions are short-lived, though, as the Living Gods are well-known to greedily take care of their kingdoms.

East of the domain can be found large patches of wetlands and swampy areas. After a few days of difficult travel the splendorous city-state of Athenaeum can be seen from afar, revealing its shining domes and towers of libraries and academies. Going further, it is

possible to reach the gold-bathed spires of Sunvalley.

The northeastern region blossoms with large plantations of olive, wheat and corn, constantly tended by ever-singing farmers, and is riddled by channels leading to the sea. The wide fields surround the city-state of Erostown, which seems to be in some kind of eternal party. Not that the population is actually happy, but there is a sensation of euphoria always lingering in the air.

Far into the north is a wide island, a piece of barren land, which holds a large and abandoned temple complex, once dedicated to Zeus. This was the site of the incident that created the Living Gods and locked Hercules' fate with theirs forever. The place is believed to be haunted and no one willingly goes there, not even monsters. Moans and inhuman screams echo through the night from that place, known to all as the home of the Forsaken One.

## Cultural Level

Classical (4) in the city-estates, although the scientific, cultural and philosophic advancements rarely spread to the countryside, which remains mostly under Iron Age (3).

## Major Settlements

Erostown (pop. 2,500), Sunvalley (pop. 2,000), Nikopolis (pop. 2,500), Athenaeum (pop. 1,500), Hadespit (pop. 2,000) and Windydale (pop. 2,500).

## The Folk

Population— 25,000. Humans 90%, Halflings 2%, Gnomes 1%, Elves 1%, Half-elves 1%, Dwarves 3%, Other 2%. Languages— Olympian\*, Hafling, Dwarf, Elven. Religion: the Olympic Pantheon\*.

Humans born in Olympus are olive-tanned and of somehow massive yet elegant built, often hardened by endless work at he fields or mines and by excessive taxation and

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abuse by authorities. Hair color is usually brown or black, and those who are born with blond or red hair usually have their hair color constantly changed by their parents, for fear that the local enforcers of the Gods will notice them, because different hair color might indicate “a sign of the gods”. Eye color is almost always dark brown or black. People with green or blue eyes endure a hard time trying to conceal this feature, for the same reason explained for the hair.

People of both genders dress simple, unadorned cotton working clothes, rough linen dresses and leather aprons when at home or working, while those in the cities prefer more elaborated silk clothing. Women in the city-states wear long dresses with one shoulder uncovered, clasped at the waist by finely crafted belts, and men wear leather trousers and boots, and fine cotton or linen shirts. Jewelry is common only at the courts and inside the temples, accompanying fine silk clothing. Laborers and farmers usually wear only family jewels, as a matter of traditional pride, perhaps the only pride they still keep.

Dwarves are mostly miners and live near the high mountains by the center of each realm. They are the race that has the most contact with the city-states, and their emissaries are always welcome in the courts, especially when they bring fine metallic or jeweled gifts. The largest dwarven concentration is near Nikopolis in the west, as Ares gives wide support to their ore-mining operation. Curiously, the partially underground realm of Hades has the lowest dwarven population.

The other races usually dwell in the forested areas at the vicinity of the farmlands. They sometimes do trade with the local farmers and herders, but avoid extended contact. Elves and gnomes, mainly, prefer to stay as far away from major human settlements as they can, for their natural magic abilities always attract unwanted attention.

There seem to be a varied population of monstrous humanoids roaming the farther lands, deeper caverns and more isolated islands. Tales

of centaurs, goblinoids, minotaurs, harpies, medusae, and even cyclops and giants are common talk by the fireplace and in the local taverns. Most people regard them as fantasies, but occasionally proof of their existence is brought back by hunters or soldiers coming from the edges of the realms. Fishermen also tell tales of monstrous creatures in the sea, and of beautiful but deadly mermaid-looking women living in the most external islands, singing at night and luring seamen to their deaths in the sharp coral reefs. Most such tales are completely disregarded.

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## The Law

Absolutist feudal theocracy. The six realms are governed by the Living Gods themselves. Each city-state is governed by a council appointed by the local deity. A complex bureaucracy surrounds the council and administrates the nearby region, up to a maximum distance measured by 2-4 days of travel on horseback. Each realm has well-known borders, usually set and maintained by local militias, except for Ares' realm borders, which are heavily patrolled by his army.

Each realm has its own taxes and fees, but prices vary little, except on products imported from one realm to the other. The threats of internal war and occasional attempts of one deity to extend its realm's borders into another's usually raise tensions so much that importation fees double or even triple the prices set in the *Player's Handbook* and *Dungeon Master Guide*. Besides, there are taxes and fees for nearly everything: entering and leaving a city-state (cheaper for locals to enter and for foreigners to leave them), crossing internal borders (varying according to the reason for the trip), owning obviously weapon-like tools and implements etc. Many priests, militia men, scribes, nobles and administrators are highly susceptible to bribes and/or blackmail. The overall government system is corrupt and keeps "castes" of professions and political positions, usually in the hands of the same families and guilds, following the same system found in the domain's original land.

Aside from that, life is normally peaceful. Only Ares is actively arming his soldiers, but he has unsuccessfully tried to invade neighboring realms and is used to vent his frustrations on his own people, thus weakening them. Each "living deity" has its own way of handling problems:

Aphrodite personally charms and dominates potential troublemakers, or sends her "priestesses" (mostly bards and sorcerers) to deal with them, always protected by dominated

soldiers "borrowed" from Ares. She also promotes bacchanals and holds several public demonstrations and parties in her own honor. Unknown to most people, she has dominated or made deals with some monstrous humanoid tribes and has granted them access to the city-state underground passages and mazes, so that they may emerge in the case of an emergency.

Apollo plays the "resplendent and merciful god" role, often making grandiose and unexpected appearances in marketplaces and squares, so that "his people" may worship him directly. He occasionally makes a public display of his powers by incinerating spies and traitors live, in order to keep would-be rebels in check. He combines his divinatory powers with those of his selected spellcasters, to know as much as he can about everyone and everything. It is said that Apollo has eyes everywhere, and that is not far from the truth.

Ares holds a typically military city-state, encouraging physical exercise and fighting prowess. His realm is large and obviously the most well armed, but this has added little to his power. He openly promotes arena games and occasionally fights in the arena himself. He also sends his soldiers and hunters on errands to find exotic monsters to either fight in his arena or become his slaves and "special guardians". He keeps his people together both by fear and with the promise of grand conquests. He is the "living deity" who uses the fewest numbers of spellcasters, as he secretly fears magic he does not understand. Innate spellcasters, bards and wizards usually are executed as traitors, even at young ages.

Athena extensively uses her magic and that of the sorcerers under her power and guidance. She also plays up with people's fears and secret desires, using her enormous network of spies to keep her informed of everything that happens. She has filled Athenaeum with libraries, philosophic schools and research facilities, and people come from all realms to study here. The best and most prominent students never return to their homes, being enlisted to her entourage of sages and advisors.

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Hades governs a semi-subterranean realm, his city carved in living rock at the side of a dormant volcanic mountain. He constantly animates undead minions and uses them to scare his own people and any foreigners that look suspicious or dangerous to him. His ruthless undead patrols are infamous. He encourages his chosen spellcasters to dabble deep into necromancy and conjuration magic. He is seldom seen by his subjects and they are grateful for that, as his appearances usually are portents of doom.

Hermes keeps the most well-organized trading system--as well as the largest network of spies and thieves--of the domain, taking full advantage of the location he chose for Windydale, right in the middle of all major trading routes, being at the center of the mainland and having two rivers with ports. He sometimes uses his speed to amaze and surprise his own subjects and followers, suddenly appearing to them in all his glory at the least expected moment. He encourages all types of games of running and also has the fastest horses of the country. When a neighboring realm causes him any problem (as with Ares' invasions), he simply shuts down official trading operations and raises all smuggling fees to that place, making life miserable and forcing the opposing ruler to step back.

For all their power, they are not true gods, do not have any divine ranks and cannot grant spells. As priests of their religion were never able to perform any magic, no one seems to care. They all have issued edicts against the uncensored use of magic or the worship of any "false gods" in their realms, and have ordered their servants to actively search for magical writings and objects of any kind, as well as for anyone who demonstrates natural or acquired magic abilities. These people and objects are to be taken to the temples, to be closely studied by the gods themselves and their scholars, scribes and priests.

Some of the divine rulers are slowly building up small armies of spellcasters (mainly

sorcerers), while others use them as guinea pigs in experiences or simply have them executed for "high treason against the gods". Even the gods do not know, however, that some ancient scrolls escape the notice of their followers and a few bards, wizards and sorcerers are able to remain unseen. In the large countryside and forested areas, druids and rangers also elude their persecutors. This greatly annoys the rulers, but the general populace usually protects those gifted with magic, as they see a spark of hope flashing once again.

## Trade and Diplomacy

Resources – olives, rice, wheat, potatoes, wine, beer, spices, salt, sausages, almonds, sheep, cattle, dairy products, various types of fish and seafood, ceramics, leather, bronze and iron goods, timber, iron, copper, gems, silk, linen, cotton, cloth, culture. Coinage – celestial (gp), starlight (sp), scourge (cp). Currency names may vary from realm to realm. In the past, each realm tried to coin its own money with the effigy of its patron deity, but no realm would accept coins from each other, so there was an agreement on producing a single coinage style.

## Characters

Classes: barbarians, druids, fighters, rangers, rogues. Bards, sorcerers and wizards are extremely rare and usually either work for the gods or are running from them. Clerics of the local "gods" do not receive spells, although adepts, druids and shamans cast spells. Skills: Appraise, Bluff, Craft (armorsmithing, blacksmithing, carpentry, leatherworking, sculpture, shipmaking, stonemasonry, weaponsmithing, weaving), Gather Information, Handle Animal, Hide, Intimidate, Knowledge (monster lore, nature, religion), Profession (farmer, fisherman, herbalist, herdsman, sailor, scribe, tanner) Ride, Wilderness Lore. Feats: Alertness, Cold One, Mounted Combat (plus derivatives), Toughness, Track.

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## Personalities of Note

### The gods walk among us...

Before the events that lead to the formation of Olympus, the Seven High Priests acted as the Voices of the Gods. After the ritual and the explosion, the surviving six came to believe they were the Living Gods themselves. They all share special abilities and resistances, and some have developed deeper understanding of magic, raising in class levels as sorcerers or bards. They took the name of the deities that best suited their newfound powers and trained intensively in their use. This even changed some of the original fiend's powers, although they do not know that, as they did not even have any sure idea of what such powers should be like. If this change was a natural consequence of their deeper dabbling into the forbidden lore or if was the will of the Dark Powers (or of the true Gods) no one knows.

The magical essence of the fiendish entity they tried to summon gave them power but for a price. More and more they see themselves as divine beings, being even more contemptuous of mankind than before. As once they saw themselves as rightful leaders, now they think human life and death are totally theirs to dispose of at will. The symptoms of madness caused by extensive mental contact with a corrupting magical force are already, if subtly, manifesting in their pompous manners and paranoid attitudes. Their eyes also betray their inhuman nature: when a Living God becomes enraged, its eyes suddenly flash with dark red radiance for a moment.

The fact that, as they gain further class levels and hit dice, they also develop and discover new fiendish abilities, has only added to their corruption. They no can be longer considered humans, but are not true outsiders yet. As such, none of them manifest a reality wrinkle, nor have they performed any power rituals. They already are sensitive to spells that affect summoned creatures, however. For game purposes, each one has the Half-fiend template

added (see the Monster Manual, page 215), with the following exceptions:

**Creature Type:** changed to Outsider, therefore they cannot be raised or resurrected (except by a *Wish* or *Miracle*) as long as they keep the fiendish essence merged with their own souls. Nevertheless, they don't have reality wrinkles (only a supernatural aura) or phylacteries. When killed, the fiendish essence merges with the earth, in what is called "absorption" (see below). After the absorption is complete, the "god" becomes human again and remains dead. Considering the many crimes they perpetrated over the years, however, it is quite likely that their souls would not promptly rest upon death, and chances for undeath are high.

**Speed:** none of them has developed wings. Most have kept their natural speed, except for Hermes, who was granted +20 feet/round.

**Armor Class:** Natural armor improves by +2. Attacks: none of them has developed bite attacks. They all keep their claws retracted, in order to look more human and less frightening, but use them if necessary.

**Special Attacks:** each individual "god" has the following special attacks:

*Aura (Su):* each "god" exudes a 50-foot-radius aura that has two effects: it raises the ethereal resonance in the area by 1 rank (to a maximum of 5), acting as a portable sinkhole of evil, and creates emotional and morale effects on allies and/or opponents. Those auras targeting enemies allow a save, and whether or not the save is successful, the same creature cannot be affected by this power for a day. See individual character info.

*Common Spell-like Abilities:* all six "Living Gods" have the following spell-like abilities in common, all functioning as the spells of the same names cast by a 14<sup>th</sup>-level sorcerer unless where noted otherwise: *Magic Circle against Good* (always active, but can be turned off at will; if dispelled, it can be reactivated during the character's next turn as a free action. The



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bonuses granted are not included in the character info); *Teleport without Error* (at will, self plus 50 pounds of objects only).

*Individual Spell-like Abilities:* each “god” has been granted unique powers, which were quite different from those listed in the table presented at the Monster Manual. These powers are listed for each individual “god” and function as the spells of same names cast by a sorcerer of their total level, except for specific descriptions otherwise.

*Gaze (Su):* each “god” has a specific gaze attack, usable three times per day, with a 30-foot range. Different from some gaze attacks, this can be used against the same target within the same day.

**Special Qualities:** they all have keen vision (both low-light vision and 60-foot darkvision). They all keep the template’s poison immunity and acid, cold and fire resistance 20. They are also immune to disease, soul binding or trapping, spiritual possession and any attacks that must target a living creature, and all have the following special qualities:

*Absorption (Su):* if one of the “gods” ever dies, the fiendish essence is scattered throughout the land as a wave and reabsorbed by the remaining gods. This process takes variable time to be completed, according to the relative distance between the dead one and each of the others. The wave crosses land and water at an unencumbered human’s normal running speed (about 20 miles per hour) and rebounds at the domain borders (even if they are open), moving at a different direction, until it reaches one of the surviving “gods”. Some protective spells might prevent the “god” from entering in contact with the essence until all of it is absorbed by the others.

At the end of the absorption period (DM’s choice), each of the remaining “gods” experiments a power surge that enhances him or her by 2HD, with the accompanying changes in base attack bonus, saves etc., as well as the emergence of at least one more spell-like ability.

*Vulnerabilities (Ex):* they are vulnerable to spells that affect outsiders and summoned creatures. Perhaps due to a dying curse by the High Priest of Zeus, which no one – except for Hercules – heard during the ritual and the battle within the temple, they are not resistant to electricity; in fact, all of them suffer an extra 50% damage from lightning and electricity-based attacks if they fail a saving throw.

During the ritual, before joining hands, the seven had signed their names with their own blood in a mystic document, an “infernal contract” of sorts, supposedly granting power over the summoned fiend, and therefore they are vulnerable to their true names signed there, lost to history and replaced by the names of the gods they impersonate. Each one knows the names of all the others, and Hercules also knows them all by the true name. Upon hearing his or her own true name, a false deity is *stunned* (no save) for 1d4+1 rounds. The scroll with their names, along with the name of the entity they were trying to summon (which causes the same effect and only Athena knows for sure, as she was the one researching it) was not destroyed in the explosion, and remains somewhere in the ruined temple.

**Abilities:** there may be variable changes in ability bonuses.

**Skills:** they all have kept the extra skill points granted to humans.

**Feats:** They all have kept the extra feat granted to humans at first level.

In the text below there is a deeper view of each one of these creatures who “play god”.

“Aphrodite”

**Medium-size Female Outsider (5’8” tall), 3<sup>rd</sup>-level Aristocrat/7<sup>th</sup>-level Bard, Chaotic Evil, CR12**

**HD** 3d8+8 + 7d6+12 (59hp)

**Initiative:** +3 Dex

**Speed:** 30ft.



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**AC:** 18 (+3 Dex, +2 natural, +2 bracelets, +1 ring), touch 14, flat-footed 15

**Attacks:** +11/+6 melee or +11/+6 ranged (+1 returning dagger), +8 melee (2 claws)

**Damage:** 1d4+2 (+1 returning dagger), 1d4+1 (claw)

**Face/Reach:** 5ft. by 5ft./5ft.

**Special Attacks:** aura, bard abilities, mind-bending gaze, spells, spell-like abilities

**Special Qualities:** bardic knowledge, damage reduction 10/+1, immunities, keen vision, resistances, SR18, vulnerabilities

**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +9, Wil +9

**Abilities:** Str 13, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 17, Wis 12, Cha 24.

**Skills:** Alchemy +7, Appraise +4, Balance +6, Bluff +12, Concentration +9, Craft (Brewing) +8, Diplomacy +11, Disguise +14, Forgery +6, Gather Information +7, Hide +5, Innuendo +4, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +7, Knowledge (religion) +5, Listen +6, Move Silently +7, Perform (ballad, chant, comedy, dance, drama, flute, harp, lute, mandolin, melody, mime, pan pipes, storytelling) +20, Ride +3, Scribe +10, Sense Motive +6, Spellcraft +8, Spot +6, Use Magic Device +15, Wilderness Lore +3.

**Feats:** Alertness, Brew Potion, Craft Wondrous Item, Spell Focus (Enchantment), Weapon Finesse (dagger)

**Signature Equipment:** +1 returning dagger, +2 bracelets of armor (as bracers), +1 ring of protection, cloak of charisma +2.

**Spell-like abilities:** (as 10<sup>th</sup>-level Bard, save DC22) at will – *Alter Self*, *Charm Person*; 3/day – *Confusion*, *Enthrall*; 1/day – *Dominate Person*, *Hold Monster*

**Bard Spells:** 3/5/4/2. Base DC 17 + spell level, 19 + spell level for Enchantment spells.

**Bard Spells Known:** Cantrips: *Daze*, *Detect Magic*, *Ghost Sound*, *Light*, *Open/Close*, *Read Magic*; 1<sup>st</sup>-level: *Charm Person*, *Cure Light Wounds*, *Hypnotism*, *Sleep*; 2<sup>nd</sup>-level: *Detect Thoughts*, *Hold Person*, *Mirror Image*, *Suggestion*; 3<sup>rd</sup>-level: *Charm Monster*, *Lesser Geas*.

Aphrodite looks like a stunningly beautiful woman in her mid-twenties, with golden hair and deep, intense blue eyes. Before

the incident in the temple, she was black-haired and had dark brown eyes. She is moody, has a strong (and usually bad) temper and is quite unpredictable. No one knows exactly how to please her and were it not for her mind-controlling powers, she might have ended up alone a long time ago.

In the old world, she was a mischievous, petty seductress who kept ally against ally, so that no one would join forces and turn against her. Now, as a Living Goddess, she thrives in personal pleasure of all forms and is always eager for deeper, more extravagant experiences.

**Combat:** Aphrodite shuns direct combat and prefers to be protected by her uncountable minions. She is more than able to defend herself against most enemies, though.

**Aura (Su):** Aphrodite's aura enhances morale to her allies and servants, giving them a +2 bonus to attack and weapon damage rolls. When protecting her from danger, this bonus raises to +4.

**Bardic Abilities:** she has all bardic abilities listed under "Bardic Music" in the PHB.

**Mind-bending Gaze (Su):** 3/day, Will save DC22, functions like the Domination Gaze of the vampire (*Monster Manual*, page 221). A creature that fails three consecutive uses of this attack falls under her charm and receives the Obedient special quality.

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## “Apollo”

**Medium-size Male Outsider (6’5” tall), 4<sup>th</sup>-level Aristocrat/6<sup>th</sup>-level Bard, Neutral Evil, CR12**

HD 4d8+16 + 6d6+24 (79hp)

Initiative: +3 Dex

Speed: 30ft.

AC: 21 (+3 Dex, +2 bracelets, +4 [+2 leather armor], +2 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 16

Attacks: +12/+7 melee (+1 flaming burst longsword) or +11/+6 melee (claws); +10/+5 ranged (masterwork [Str 18] composite shortbow)

Damage: 1d8+5 (flaming burst longsword), 1d4+4 (claws), 1d8+4 (arrow)

**Face/Reach:** 5ft. by 5ft./5ft.

**Special Attacks:** aura, bardic abilities, recalling gaze, spells, spell-like abilities

**Special Qualities:** damage reduction 10/+1, immunities, keen vision, resistances, SR18, vulnerabilities

**Saves:** Fort +7, Ref +9, Will +9

**Abilities:** Str 19, Dex 16, Con 18, Int 18, Wis 11, Cha 19.

**Skills:** Appraise +8, Balance +8, Bluff +11, Concentration +9, Diplomacy +13, Disguise +11, Gather Information +9, Hide +8, Innuendo +9, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +6, Knowledge (religion) +5, Listen +7, Move Silently +8, Perform (ballad, chant, comedy, dance, drama, flute, harp, lute, mandolin, melody, mime, pan pipes, storytelling) +17, Ride +8, Scry +12, Sense Motive +5, Spellcraft +11, Spot +7, Use Magic Device +9, Wilderness Lore +5

**Feats:** Alertness, Cleave, Combat Casting, Great Cleave, Power Attack

**Signature Equipment:** +1 flaming burst longsword, +2 leather armor, +2 bracelets of armor (as bracers), masterwork (Str18) composite shortbow

**Spell-like abilities:** (Save DC19) at will – *Detect Thoughts*, *Produce Flame*; 3/day – *Scrying*, *Searing Light*; 1/day – *Unholy Flame Strike*, *Prying Eyes*

**Bard Spells:** 3/4/3. Base DC 14 + spell level.

**Bard Spells Known:** 0 – *Dancing Lights*, *Flare*, *Light*, *Mage Hand*, *Open/Close*, *Read Magic*; 1<sup>st</sup> – *Cause Fear*, *Charm Person*, *Detect Secret Doors*, *Unseen Servant*; 2<sup>nd</sup> – *Daylight*, *Locate Object*, *See Invisibility*.

Apollo looks like a tall, blond and handsome man in his early thirties, always dressing in gold and white silk. He loves to appear before the crowds in the finest garments, riding a finely-fitted stallion or driving a golden carriage. He usually reads the minds of his subjects while driving through the masses, trying to pick negative thoughts.

In his previous life, he was in charge of the “oracles”, a network of spies under a facade of prophets and diviners. Now he has his own true prophets and diviners and has exaggerated his own public image as the “god who knows everything”, to keep everyone fearing him. He is a master of bluff and usually gets information without the need for magic, just intimidating people and then offering his “generosity”.

**Combat:** Apollo fights for the thrill of the challenge, confident that his magical sword, his resistances and powers will be more than enough to deal with any opponent. Should the fight go against him, he has no problem in fighting dirty, summoning allies and minions to block harm’s way and making a fast retreat to return later.

**Aura (Su):** Apollo’s aura imposes his figure over his enemies, causing a morale penalty of –2 to all physical attacks directed at him. A successful Will save (DC17) negates the effect. Whether or not the save is successful, the same creature cannot be affected by this power for a day.

**Bardic Abilities:** he has all bardic abilities listed under “Bardic Music” in the PHB.

**Recalling Gaze (Su):** 3/day, Will save DC19, single target recalls damage and pain previously suffered as supernatural, licking flames, and

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suffers 3d8+6 points of fire damage, half damage if save is successful.

## “Ares”

**Medium-size Male Outsider (6'9" tall)**

**4<sup>th</sup>-level Aristocrat/6<sup>th</sup>-level Fighter, Chaotic Evil, CR12**

**HD** 4d8+16 + 6d10+24 (91hp)

**Initiative:** +2 Dex

**Speed:** 20ft. (30ft. without armor)

**AC:** 24 (+2 Dex, +2 natural, +6 [+1 breastplate], +2 bracers, +2 shield), touch 12, flat-footed 22

**Attacks:** +16/+11 melee (+1 flaming mighty cleaving longsword) or +14/+9 melee (claws) or +12/+7 ranged (shortspear)

**Damage:** 1d8+8 and 1d6 fire (+1 flaming mighty cleaving longsword), 1d4+5 (claw), 1d6+5 (shortspear)

**Face/Reach:** 5ft. by 5ft./5ft.

**Special Attacks:** aura, gaze of weakness, spells, spell-like abilities

**Special Qualities:** damage reduction 10/+1, immunities, keen vision, resistances, SR18, vulnerabilities

**Saves:** Fort +10, Ref +6, Will +9

**Abilities:** Str 20, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 15, Wis 10, Cha 15.

**Skills:** Appraise +4, Balance +6, Bluff +7, Climb +13, Craft (weaponsmith) +6, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +8, Gather Information +6, Handle Animal +6, Hide +6, Intimidate +8, Jump +9, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +3, Knowledge (religion) +4, Listen +6, Move Silently +6, Ride +6, Sense Motive +7, Spot +6, Swim +9, Wilderness Lore +6.

**Feats:** Alertness, Cleave, Dodge, Great Cleave, Iron Will, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

**Signature Equipment:** +2 bracers of armor, +1 breastplate, +1 shield, +1 flaming mighty cleaving longsword.

**Spell-like Abilities:** (Save DC17) at will – *Bull's Strength*, *Produce Flame*; 3/day – *Death Knell*, *Inflict Moderate Wounds*; 1/day – *Blade Barrier*, *Inflict Critical Wounds*.

Ares is a frightening figure, a very strong man in his mid-thirties, with silver blond hair

and violet eyes. He is always clad in once-shining armor usually soaked with his opponents' blood. He is constantly surrounded by a troop of faithful guards, usually mid-level warriors.

Back in their home world, Ares was a fierce but dirty fighter, cheating in arena competitions to secure his victories (and make profitable bets). Now he owns the arena, treats everybody as a slave and fears magic users and silver-tongued traders, mostly after hordes of undead drove his troops away from Hadespit and several of his once loyal soldiers were charmed by Aphrodite (or bribed by Hermes) and left his side.

**Aura (Su):** His aura affects his enemies (whether directly attacking him or not) as a Cause Fear spell (–2 morale penalty to attacks, weapon damage rolls and saving throws, and flees as well as possible), but can affect any number of HD. A successful Will save (DC15) negates the effect. Whether or not the save is successful, the same creature cannot be affected by this power for a day.

**Gaze of Weakness (Su):** 3/day, Fort save DC17 or take 1d4+1 points of temporary Strength damage.

## “Athena”

**Medium-size Female Outsider (5'8" tall),**

**3<sup>rd</sup>-level Aristocrat/7<sup>th</sup>-level Wizard, Neutral Evil, CR13**

**HD** 3d8+6 + 7d4+14 (51hp)

**Initiative:** +3 Dex

**Speed:** 30ft.

**AC:** 18 (+3 Dex, +2 natural, +2 bracelets, +1 ring), touch 14, flat-footed 15

**Attacks:** +8 melee or +9 ranged (+1 unholy returning dagger) or +7 melee (claws)

**Damage:** 1d4+3 (+1 unholy returning dagger), 1d6+2 (claws)

**Face/Reach:** 5ft. by 5ft./5ft.

**Special Attacks:** aura, mind-clouding gaze, spells, spell-like abilities

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**Special Qualities:** damage reduction 10/+1, familiar (homunculus) immunities, keen vision, resistances, SR18, vulnerabilities

**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +12

**Abilities:** Str 14, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 24, Wis 18, Cha 16.

**Skills:** Alchemy +12, Appraise +12, Balance +5, Bluff +9, Concentration +15, Craft (brewing) +12, Diplomacy +12, Disguise +10, Gather Information +8, Hide +8, Innuendo +12, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (local) +12, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +12, Knowledge (religion) +12, Listen +9, Move Silently +8, Ride +8, Scry +12, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +20, Spot +9, Wilderness Lore +9.

**Feats:** Alertness (w/ familiar only, bonuses not included in skill list), Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item, Improved Familiar (homunculus<sup>[\*]</sup>), Scribe Scroll, Spell Mastery (*Burning Hands*, *Dispel Magic*, *Enervation*, *Ray of Enfeeblement*, *Invisibility Sphere*).

[\*] Feat from *Tome and Blood*. See

“Homunculus” in the *Monster Manual*.

**Signature Equipment:** +2 bracelets of armor (as bracers), +1 ring of protection, +2 unholy defending dagger, tiara of intellect +2 (as headband), wand of fireball.

**Spell-like Abilities:** (as 11<sup>th</sup>-level wizard, Save DC 22) at will – *Detect Thoughts*, *Sanctuary*; 3/day – *Dominate Person*, *Confusion*; 1/day – *Feeblemind*, *True Seeing*.

**Spells:** 4/6/5/4/2. Base save DC 17 + spell level.

**Spellbook:** 0 – all; 1<sup>st</sup> – *Burning Hands*, *Color Spray*, *Comprehend Languages*, *Detect Undead*, *Grease*, *Identify*, *Mage Armor*, *Magic Missile*, *Mount*, *Ray of Enfeeblement*; 2<sup>nd</sup> – *Blindness/Deafness*, *Blur*, *Knock*, *Mirror Image*, *Scare*, *See Invisibility*, *Shatter*, *Web*; 3<sup>rd</sup> – *Clairaudience/Clairvoyance*, *Dispel Magic*, *Fireball*, *Gaseous Form*, *Invisibility Sphere*, *Stinking Cloud*; 4<sup>th</sup> – *Bestow Curse*, *Emotion*, *Enervation*, *Lesser Geas*.

Athena looks like an always-frowning, very concerned woman in her late thirties, always ready to give an opinion on something,

yet restraining herself most of the time. She always dresses as a sage, with a long cloak and a golden tiara adorning her forehead, can usually be seen carrying a bunch of books and scrolls with her, and keeps polite conversation with anyone she deems worthy of her attention, even her potential enemies. She is very proud of her knowledge and wisdom, and finds mostly boring not having someone to share intelligent words.

Among the Living Gods, she is the only one who has created a companion for herself, an homunculus familiar known as Bubo, shaped like a 1-foot silver owl. The creature is always nested on her shoulder or flying around her, making screechy remarks on something.

**Combat:** Athena despises physical combat and will avoid it at any costs. If seriously threatened, she will try to attack enemies from a safe distance, then create some diversion or incapacitate foes with fire and energy spells, and then use her *Invisibility Sphere* to flee along with her familiar.

**Aura (Su):** Athena’s aura subtly weakens the willpower and resolve of her opponents, causing a –2 morale penalty to all Will checks and Wisdom-based skill checks. A successful Will save (DC17, initial –2 penalty applies) negates the effect. Whether or not the save is successful, the same creature cannot be affected by this power for a day.

**Mind-clouding Gaze (Su):** 3/day, Will save DC 20, or take 1d4 points of temporary Wisdom damage.

## “Hades”

**Medium-size Male Outsider (6’8” tall), 3<sup>rd</sup>-level Aristocrat/7<sup>th</sup>-level Rogue, Neutral Evil, CR12**

**HD** 3d8+9 + 7d6+21 (68hp)

**Initiative:** +3 Dex

**Speed:** 30ft.

**AC:** 23 (+3 Dex, +2 natural, +4 studded leather armor, +2 bracelets, +2 cloak), touch 13, flat-footed 23

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**Attacks:** +10/+5 melee (+1 wounding shortsword) or +9 melee (claws); +10/+5 ranged (masterwork [Str 14] composite shortbow)

**Damage:** 1d6+3 (+1 wounding shortsword), 1d6+2 (claws), 1d8+2 (arrow)

**Face/Reach:** 5ft. by 5ft./5ft.

**Special Attacks:** aura, withering gaze, sneak attack +4d6, spells, spell-like abilities.

**Special Qualities:** damage reduction 10/+1, evasion, immunities, keen vision, resistances, SR18, uncanny dodge, vulnerabilities.

**Saves:** Fort +6, Ref +9, Will +7

**Abilities:** Str 14, Dex 17, Con 16, Int 17, Wis 11, Cha 16.

**Skills:** Appraise +5, Balance +8, Bluff +10, Climb +12, Decipher Script +13, Diplomacy +7, Disable Device +11, Disguise +10, Escape Artist +8, Gather Information +8, Hide +7, Innuendo +7, Intimidate +16, Jump +5, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +5, Knowledge (religion) +5, Listen +7, Move Silently +10, Open Lock +10, Ride +3, Search +10, Sense Motive +6, Spot +7, Tumble +11, Use Magic Device +13, Use Rope +8, Wilderness Lore +5.

**Feats:** Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Mobility.

**Signature Equipment:** +2 bracelets of armor (as bracers), +1 studded leather armor, +2 cloak or protection, +1 wounding shortsword, masterwork (Str 14) composite shortbow.

**Spell-like Abilities:** (Save DC18): at will – *Cause Fear*, *Chill Touch*; 3/day – *Animate Dead* (as 11<sup>th</sup> level Cleric), *Invisibility*; 1/day – *Circle of Doom*, *Create Undead* (as 12<sup>th</sup> level Cleric).

Hades is a gloomy man, apparently in his late forties. He always wears long black robes over his armor. He walks through the dark corridors of his half-buried fortress, usually surrounded by undead guardians of various types. He is quite fond of undead company and finds free-willed living creatures very annoying. His deepest desire is to be loved and respected, but all he gets from his subjects is fear, so he enforces the feeling as much as he can, while getting from the unliving the unquestionable obedience he wants so badly.

**Combat:** Hades prefers to command his undead minions to do the fight, from the shadows. Only if seriously threatened will he personally enter combat, using his roguish abilities and spell-like powers as best as he can. One of his favorite strategies is to kill some of his foes and immediately animate them as faithful minions, sending them against their former companions.

**Aura (Su):** Hades exudes an aura of Fear (Will save DC16 or become panicked until 2d4 rounds after leaving the affected area). Whether or not the save is successful, the same creature cannot be affected by this power for a day.

**Withering Gaze (Su):** 3/day, Fortitude save DC16 or suffer 1d4 points of temporary Constitution damage.

“Hermes”

**Medium-size Male Outsider (5’10” tall)**

**3<sup>rd</sup>-level Aristocrat/7<sup>th</sup>-level Rogue, Neutral Evil, CR12**

**HD** 3d8+9 + 7d6+21 (68hp)

**Initiative:** +9 (+5 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

**Speed:** 50ft.

**AC:** 29 (+6 Dex, +4 haste, +2 bracelets, +4 studded leather armor, +1 ring, +2 natural), touch 21, flat-footed 29

**Attacks:** +14/+9 melee (+1 dancing shortsword) or +9/+4 melee (claws); +13/+8 ranged (+1 hand crossbow)

**Damage:** 1d6+3 (+1 dancing shortsword), 1d6+2 (claw), 1d4+1 (bolt)

**Face/Reach:** 5ft. by 5ft./5ft.

**Special Attacks:** aura, gaze of fatigue, sneak attack +4d6, spell-like abilities.

**Special Qualities:** damage reduction 10/+1, evasion, haste, immunities, keen vision, resistances, SR18, uncanny dodge, vulnerabilities.

**Saves:** Fort +6, Ref +12, Will +6

**Abilities:** Str 14, Dex 22, Con 16, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 16.

**Skills:** Appraise +4, Balance +11, Bluff +12, Climb +12, Decipher Script +8, Diplomacy +7, Disable Device +15, Disguise +10, Escape Artist +10, Gather Information +8, Hide +11, Innuendo +6, Intimidate +13, Jump +5, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +4,



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Knowledge (religion) +4, Listen +6, Move Silently +13, Open Lock +11, Ride +6, Search +10, Sense Motive +5, Spot +6, Tumble +16, Use Magic Device +10, Use Rope +10, Wilderness Lore +6

**Feats:** Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Weapon Finesse (shortsword).

**Signature Equipment:** +2 bracelets of armor (as bracers), +1 studded leather armor, +1 ring or protection, +1 dancing shortsword, +1 hand crossbow.

**Spell-like Abilities:** (Save DC18): at will – *Alter Self*, *Haste* (always active, see below), *Fly*; 3/day – *Hold Person*, *Mirror Image*; 1/day – *Mass Haste*.

Hermes looks like a skinny, healthy young man in his early twenties, his muscles flexible and agile. His hair is light red and his eyes are almost golden in hue. He is constantly vibrating and buzzing around, and seems to feel uncomfortable when something keeps him in the same place for more than a few minutes. He not only runs about his palace and the vast marketplace around it, he also enjoys flying and suddenly teleporting to the midst of groups of people, scaring them with his displays of power.

**Combat:** Hermes likes to wear off his opponents with his extreme agility, and then move to finish the job. He constantly taunts his foes while in combat, trying to irritate them so much as to make them make fatal mistakes.

**Aura (Su):** Hermes' aura has an effect similar to the *Slow* spell: those who fail the Will save (DC16) can only perform partial actions and suffer a –2 slow penalty to AC, melee attack rolls, melee damage rolls and Reflex saves, and are able to jump only half as far as normal. Whether or not the save is successful, the same creature cannot be affected by this power for a day.

**Gaze of Fatigue (Su):** 3/day, Will save DC18 or become fatigued for 2d4 rounds (cannot run or charge, –2 decrease in Strength and Dexterity).

**Haste (Sp):** Hermes is permanently under the effect of a *Haste* spell, receiving a +4 haste bonus to AC, being able to jump one and a half times as far as normal and taking one extra partial action per round, either before or after his regular action.

“The Forsaken One, the One Who would be Zeus”

**3<sup>rd</sup>-Rank Male Human Ghost, Medium-size Male Undead (incorporeal) (5'11" tall)**

**4<sup>th</sup>-level Aristocrat/6<sup>th</sup>-level Rogue, Neutral Evil, CR14**

**HD** 10d12 (65hp)

**Initiative:** +1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative

**Speed:** fly 30ft. (perfect)

**AC:** 20 (+3 Dex, +7 deflection) (15 on Ethereal), touch 20, flat-footed 17 (touch 13, flat-footed 20 on Ethereal)

**Attacks:** +8 melee (+8 on Ethereal, touch) or +9/+4 (+1 ghost touch shock dagger)

**Damage:** 1d4 and 1d8+12 electrical (1d4+1 and 1d8+12 electrical on Ethereal, incorporeal touch), 1d4+2 + 1d6 electrical (+1 ghost touch shock dagger)

**Face/Reach:** 5ft. by 5ft./5ft.

**Special Attacks:** aura, commanding appearance, command undead, manifestation, sneak attack +3d6, spells, spell-like abilities, telekinesis.

**Special Qualities:** evasion, immunities, incorporeal, keen vision, resistances, SR18, rejuvenation, turn resistance +4, uncanny dodge, vulnerabilities.

**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +9, Will +9

**Abilities:** Str 13, Dex 16, Con –, Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 24.

**Skills:** Appraise +8, Bluff +20, Decipher Script +16, Diplomacy +20, Disable Device +13, Disguise +20, Gather Information +20, Hide +24, Innuendo +7, Intimidate +20, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +5, Knowledge (religion) +5, Listen +21, Open Lock +10, Ride +3, Search +21, Sense Motive +9, Spot +21, Use Magic Device +18, Wilderness Lore +8.

**Feats:** Dodge, Expertise, Great Fortitude, Mobility, Whirlwind Attack.

**Signature Equipment:** +1 ghost touch shock dagger, cloak of charisma +2



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**Spell-like Abilities:** (as 12<sup>th</sup>-level sorcerer, save DC22) at will – *Dancing Lights*, *Shocking Grasp* (accounting for the electrical damage listed above), *Telekinesis*; 3/day – *Hypnotic Pattern*, *Lightning Bolt*; 1/day – *Control Weather*.

The high priest, head of the Council and father of Hercules is a fearsome image to behold. His almost transparent body is always covered in wisps of cold white fog with sparkling blue radiance. He dresses as he was at the time of his death, in a ceremonial white robe and a light blue cloak over his shoulders. His hair and beard have turned silvery white, giving the impression of being constantly touched by some supernatural wind, and his eyes are deep sky blue.

In life, he managed to keep his position of power as head of the Council by playing the other members one against another. He was able to absorb part of the outsider's essence but his transition to undead state changed everything. He is anchored to the temple and cannot go further than 300ft. from the high altar.

**Combat:** in life the high priest was not much of a warrior. Now his amazing powers encouraged him to challenge anyone who dares trespass his territory, even though he will use any trick he can in order to avoid personal harm. Mostly, he will exhaust dangerous opponents by sending the temple guards (lesser undead) after them. His entourage also contains some of the original rebels from Hercules' band, tormented and twisted spirits, eager to exact revenge upon him for having left them behind.

Over the last years, some of the Living Gods have sent troops to explore the abandoned temple and find the scroll with their names and the infernal contract. Only a handful barely survived, while all the others became the Forsaken One's undead servants.

**Special Attacks:** the save DC against the Forsaken One's powers is 22.

**Aura (Su):** the Forsaken One generates an aura of despair within a 75-foot radius. Those who fail the save suffer a –3 morale penalty to all

attack rolls, skill checks and saves, until they leave the radius of the area. Whether or not the save is successful, the same creature cannot be affected by this power for a day.

**Commanding Appearance (Su):** treat as a gaze attack with a range of 30ft., but affects all who look directly at him, as per the Dominate Person spell cast by a sorcerer of 13<sup>th</sup>-level.

**Command Undead (Su):** as a 10<sup>th</sup>-level Cleric.

**Immunities (Ex):** The Forsaken one is immune to cold and electrical attacks.

**Incorporeal:** can be harmed only by incorporeal/ethereal creatures, +1 or better magic weapons, or magic, with a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source. Can pass through solid objects at will, and own attacks bypass armor (except ghost touch armor and force armor). Always moves silently.

**Rejuvenation (Su):** if destroyed, the Forsaken One will restore itself in 2d4 days. The only sure way to kill it for good is intimately linked to the Darklord's curse: it is necessary to reunite the Living Gods and Hercules and perform the ritual again, then destroy the summoned fiend. Free from the outsider's essence, the troubled spirit will finally rest.

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## "Hercules"

### Darklord of Olympus

**Medium-size Male Outsider (7' tall),  
1<sup>st</sup>-level Aristocrat/12<sup>th</sup>-level Fighter, Neutral  
Evil, CR15**

**HD** 1d8+5 + 12d10+60 (136hp)

**Initiative:** +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

**Speed:** 40ft.

**AC:** 21 (+4 Dexterity, +5 [+2 Lion Hide], +2 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 17

**Attacks:** +21/+16/+11 melee (+1 longsword) or +19/+14/+9 melee (claws); +17/+12/+7 ranged (+1 masterwork [Str18] composite longbow)

**Damage:** 1d8+10 (+1 longsword), 1d4+7 (claw), 1d8+4 (arrow)

**Face/Reach:** 5ft. by 5ft./5ft.

**Special Attacks:** cursed rage

**Special Qualities:** darkvision 60ft., immunities, resistances, undying essence.

**Saves:** Fort +13, Ref +8, Will +7

**Abilities:** Str 22 (24)\*, Dex 18, Con 21, Int 15, (13)\*, Wis 13, Cha 18 (12)\*.

**Skills:**<sup>(\*)</sup> Balance +8, Bluff +11 (+6), Climb +12, Diplomacy +12 (+7), Disguise +13 (+8), Gather Information +9 (+6), Handle Animal +8 (+5), Hide +4, Intimidate (+11) +8, Jump +11, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +6 (+3), Knowledge (religion) +6 (+3), Listen +8 (+6), Move Silently +6, Ride +7 (+5), Sense Motive +6, Spot +8 (+6), Swim +11, Use Rope +6, Wilderness Lore +6.

**Feats:** Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Expertise, Great Cleave, Haunted, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Leadership, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-by Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword) Weapon Specialization (longsword).

**Signature Equipment:** +2 *Lion Hide* (similar to Rhino Hide; armor check penalty -1, but no extra damage dealt by charge attacks); +1 longsword, +1 composite longbow; cursed *Bracers of Berserking Fury* (fast movement, +2 to Str, -2 to Int and Cha, see "Cursed Rage", below).

Hercules is a towering, massive 7-foot tall man, handsome but always somber. His eyes are dark blue and his tangled light blond hair

reaches his shoulders. He dresses leather pants and almost always covers his body with his enchanted lion hide. Sometimes he wears a heavy cloak trying to conceal his presence from unwelcome attention. His tale and background are presented in the introduction.

### Current Sketch

Hercules is just a shadow of the great, inspiring hero he once was. After waking up in this new land, he soon found that his once beloved lover, Dejanira, did not leave his side, but instead remains attached to him as a geist, and that terrifies and disgusts him. She is always there, her bleeding and torn body opening arms to embrace him when he is alone, weeping and trying to comfort him when his plans fail and warning him of any danger lying ahead. She protects him while he sleeps and communicates all that she saw in figments. She seems oblivious to his attempts to drive her away and only sees him as the loving, good and sometimes innocent man he once was.

In game terms he has the Haunted feat, and this has brought Hercules to a perverted cycle: Hercules noticed that Dejanira only manifests when he is alone, so he tries his best to be surrounded by people whenever he can. However, her constant appearances rapidly damage his Charisma, making him moody and inconvenient. This, added to his tendency to start a fight for the least possible reason (a side effect of his cursed bracers), usually keeps people away from him, allowing her to manifest once more and damage his Charisma just a little more, what keeps people away even more.

He managed to keep his current score just above average, but that is definitely not enough for someone who once was able to raise an army against the mighty council. Where once people saw him as their last possible hope for salvation, now they see him as a brawler and a bully, someone who only attracts the unwanted attention and wrath of the Living Gods upon himself. Most people shun him and even anyone who wishes to follow him, in the hopes to one day witness the downfall of the gods, eventually

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deserts him or ends up dead. Worse of all, his uncontrolled rage usually targets his own allies, killing the only few people who decided to follow his cause.

His battle against the Living Gods is doomed to fail. Their palaces are well-guarded and they have spies all around their cities. Most of the time, however, they ignore Hercules and his pathetic band, confident that one day he will be killed by a monster, a furious mob or even one of his allies. Unfortunately for them, however, his fate is linked to theirs in an unique fashion (see below). This tale is destined to never reach a happy end.

## Combat

Hercules is a fearsome, experienced warrior, having fought his way through the arena and, later on, against several large wild animals and groups of well-armed soldiers. He still carries souvenirs received from his former days of heroism: the Lion Hide, from a magical beast that terrorized his homeland, and the enchanted bracers his father gave him. He has taken a couple of magic weapons from past encounters with the Living Gods' high officers and makes the best use of them.

Different from the Living Gods, Hercules has no aura, no gaze attack nor spell-like abilities. He must fight his battle with his hands, weapons and skills. He has been granted the fiendish natural AC bonus, claw attacks, resistances and immunities, as well as vulnerabilities. If slain, his essence cannot be absorbed, however (see below).

Hercules despises magic and does not believe in any deity. If confronted with a mixed group, he will target spellcasters first, then move to face armed warrior-like opponents.

**Cursed Rage (Su):** caused by the bracers. Any time Hercules suffers melee damage, he must succeed at a Will save (DC20) or suffer the effects of a Barbarian Rage: +4 to Strength and Constitution, +2 morale bonus on Will saves and -2 penalty to AC, for 10 rounds. He is unable to recognize friend or foe and will ferociously hit

anyone who stands in his way. After the rage ends, he falls fatigued as if he were a 1<sup>st</sup>-level Barbarian. This power functions only once per day, but if Hercules succeeds at his save, this time does not count and he can suffer the Rage latter on the same day.

As with most cursed items, Hercules is not willing to part with his bracers, just as he does not take any active measure to get rid of Dejanira's geist.

**Skills: (\*)** Numbers in parenthesis represent his current skills and ability scores, considering the modifications imposed by his cursed bracers. His Charisma score sometimes varies from 8 to 12 (see "Feats" and Current Sketch).

**Feats:** Hercules received the Haunted feat as a bonus, due to his curse. Dejanira's geist follows him all the time and never strays more than 30ft. away from him. She is the main cause for his constantly lowered Charisma.

**Undying Essence (Su):** Hercules is forever linked to the Living Gods and the Forsaken One. He was the one providing the bloody sacrifice to the ritual and also the one who disrupted the circle. The fiendish essence inside him operates differently and cannot be reabsorbed by the others. If his body is slain, it dissolves in mists, only to reawaken 2d4 days later on the same grove where he first woke up in Olympus.

The only true way to kill Hercules is to gather him, the Living Gods (or the remaining ones, should any of them be killed and absorbed) and the Forsaken One in a circle in the abandoned temple, and then perform the ritual once again, this time with him willingly being the sacrifice. This will kill him, free Dejanira's soul and deplete the Living Gods of all fiendish power of their own, finally opening the rift and bringing the fiend into the Land of Mists. The Living Gods will still keep their own class abilities and have power over the fiend through the infernal contract, but will be mortals. Considering that none of the Living Gods wants to meet each other nor relinquish its powers, and

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that they are mortally afraid of the Forsaken One, this will probably never happen.

## Closing the Borders

Hercules rarely wishes to seal the domain, unless he senses that one of the Living Gods is trying to leave the land. Due to their linked essences, he can feel it immediately if any of his most hated enemies comes within less than a mile from the external limits of Olympus.

When this happens, the skies over the sea around Olympus are covered with stormy clouds and crossed by lightning and thunder, making it impossible to cross the furious sea waters. Ships are capsized, drowned or nearly disintegrated. No source of magic can stop the storm.

Note that, if not for this, the Living Gods could leave the domain if they wished to do so (at least two such attempts were made in the past). On the other hand, as the boundaries between their own realms within the land are purely geographical, Hercules cannot prevent them from entering each other's realm (although they seldom do it). But without reality wrinkles to protect them against closed borders effects, and being mortally frightened of lightning, they quickly turn around and return to the safety of their palaces, as soon as the storms begin."



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## STONEWALL

### RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION HIDDEN IN THE MISTS

By: Carrie Kube  
(Yaoi Huntress Earth)

"When you focus too much on the dark, there's no room for the light."

-Harry Stone (Night Court)

A modern domain, where  
faith has taken a dark  
turn...

#### The Land

Any foreigner can say that (even though the citizens claim otherwise) in Stonewall, no matter how warm it is, everything feels "cold." Ironically, it's been an eternal fall since the Mists swallowed the town and truthfully, no one seems to notice.

Before becoming a domain, Stonewall was a small town near Salem, Massachusetts that was built near a heavily forested area where many of the people made a living away from the "sinful" real world. The place still has its many trees, rich soil, and plentiful mines which could make Stonewall one of the richest domains in all of Ravenloft. Sadly, this potential may never come into existence.

#### Land-Based Powers

All constructs have the same cold and fanatical personality as the natives. If created from harpy or parts from natives that were tried in the witch trials or for being a psionic/sorcerer, they will become ridden with vengeance and will attempt to kill any Stonewall native they come across.

Any native vampires will share the darklord's self-righteousness and have large, bat-like wings.

Fiends are given a power called "Sermon," where he/she can *charm* anyone who pays attention to them while they're talking. (Note: The fiend must not be disturbed for 15 minutes or the spell breaks.) The victim must make a Will save (DC 12) or fall under the influence of the fiend. Those that fall under the influence cannot be freed unless the fiend breaks off the charm or either one dies. This is a mind-affecting supernatural ability.

#### Locations of Note

Stonewall is a simple town, but the biggest area of interest is dubbed the Hanging Square. This is where all the hangings took place during the witch trials. The ghosts of all the people Bethany has falsely accused haunt this area in search of a way to clear their name or at least get their revenge on the Darklord. The church is also under major revision and may possibly even be bigger and more splendid than what is present today.

Outside of the town is a series of small mountains dubbed Harpy Peak where a pack of malicious, trouble-making harpies dwell. Every now and then, the citizens will send a handicapped child into the area to let the harpies tear at them in hopes that they'll leave the rest of

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them alone. Though they do eat some of the weaker ones, the harpies take in the stronger ones and raise the children to hate their parents and the people of the domain so the children can extract revenge on them.

**Cultural Level:** Chivalric (8).

## The Folk

The people of Stonewall are mainly Puritans of Anglo-Saxon stock. They wear the stereotypical black and white pilgrim outfits. Silently trudging through their lives, most of the people live simple lives as farmers.

Since becoming a domain, the darklord Bethany got her wish of having more people like her, because now the villagers have become as cruel and hateful as her. They no longer wish to live away from the "sinful" world, but desire to turn all the domains to their way of life or kill them all and take their land if they refuse. So far, several missionaries have made their way into the Mists and found themselves in various domains with no luck of getting converts. Since their main tactic is standing in the streets and screaming at passersby, while insulting anyone who debates with them, there's probably a very good reason. This abuse isn't reserved for non-natives, but their own families as well. All the rage and hatefulness is often taken out on others, mostly children, so it is not uncommon to see a woman or child with bruises or fear of imaginary demons from well-meaning parents trying to exorcise their children.

The Stonewallers also believe that demons exist everywhere and will try to destroy them if they're not careful. Woe is the traveler who wears earrings or other "evil" objects for they will be ripped from them by angry townsfolk and burnt/destroyed while floods of ritualistic prayers in hopes of destroying the demons inside fill the air.

## Native Player Characters

A native PC is hard to get and even harder to get along with. The villagers believe magic is evil, so no wizards can be from this town. Sorcerers and psionics are fairly uncommon and will be killed on the spot unless they can escape. These types will quickly snap out of Bethany's influence and will have to do quite a bit of soul searching and rethinking of their lives. There can be no monks since martial arts have no existence here.

The only classes available are clerics and fighters or rangers with smokepowder proficiency. The clerics are given the powers of normal, evil clerics and can choose from the domains of War, Wrath, and Fire.

## Encounters

Besides the monsters in the Hanging Square, people have noticed a lot of harpies crawling around in the deeper parts of the mountain regions. Bethany is the only one immune to their attacks since the harpies consider her one of them and are not afraid to tell this to her face.

### Bethany Stone

#### Darklord of Stonewall

**Harpy, Lawful Evil:** CR 8; Hit Dice 7d8 (31 hp); Initiative: +2 (Dex); Spd 20ft., fly 80ft. (average); AC: 13 (+2 Dex, +1 natural); Atks: 2 Claws (+2 melee) (Face/Reach: 5ft. x 5ft/5 ft.); SA Death Shriek; Saves Fort +2, Ref +7, Wil +5; Str 10, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 13, Wis 17, Cha 9 (20 to Stonewall Natives).

**Skills and Feats:** Bluff +8, Spot +6, Knowledge (Stonewall) +9, Knowledge (religion) +9, Gather Info +9, Knowledge (medicine) +2, Intimidate +8; Dodge, Flyby Attack.

**Language:** 18th-Century English (treat as Common).

Bethany is a hateful, self-righteous woman who can easily find fault in even the kindest of beings. Hating herself for being used to cover her husband's sins, she uses her faith as a crutch for her own lost dreams and the right to



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lash out on others. She sees herself as a crusader of righteousness and truly wants to purge the world of "sin." Yet, deep inside lies a sad, bitter woman lost in a sea of broken childhood dreams that she has long tried to forget about.

Beyond her face, Bethany now resembles the very monster that her daughter claimed she was, a gift and a curse given by the Mists. Her body is that of a harpy: baggy and birdlike. But, unlike other harpies, Bethany can make her wings sprout at anytime, allowing her to pass off as a human. She often hides her new form under baggy puritan garb and tucks her blond-brown hair under a white bonnet. Since the transformation, her hair has become so tangled and filthy that any attempts of fixing it fail.

Bitterness and hate are easily marked on her weathered face that now has early crows' feet. Though not exactly ugly, time has not been kind to her. (She is now 43.) Both arms from the elbows down are now blood-red as a reminder for the act that dragged her to Ravenloft. Bethany makes little effort to hide this deformity, seeing it as a badge of pride for killing her "evil" daughter.

## Background

Like most of the Darklords, Bethany Stone wasn't born evil. At one time Bethany was a cheerful young girl full of whims and dreams, who fell in love with the "sinful" world outside of her puritan home when her father had taken her with him to establish some new trade with neighboring city. Though he hoped to show her the "evils" of the outside world, this strange new place sparked an interest in her, especially the beautifully crafted dolls she saw in toy store window.

Believing it to be her calling, she spent her spare time making dolls in hopes of one day leaving her hometown and making items as beautiful as the ones she saw as a child. But her father would not tolerate a daughter who dreamed of a life outside of the home. Finding her secret hideaway where she made her dolls,

he ripped the fruits of her labor to shreds and beat Bethany within an inch of her life. Her dreams shattered, Bethany was now a changed person.

She became focused on pleasing and reflecting the attitudes of her father. Eventually her childhood dreams became a fuzzy memory and she went on to become the wife of a man of high standing. It was an arranged marriage and Bethany was often lonely when her husband was out, but she knew her place as a woman and tried to make the best of it. Five children later (with another on the way,) Bethany was hit with a double blow: her father and husband were caught in a terrible accident. Her father had died instantly, but her husband was now in a coma-like state, leaving Bethany a confused wreck. While cleaning the house, she came across her husband's journal. Curious, she began reading; only to find out her "godly" husband had arranged the marriage as a cover-up.

A final string snapped in Bethany as she tore the pages of this diary apart, feeling used by the very people she cared about. She hated her husband for covering his sins and her father for agreeing to help him. The first thing she was going to do was to make sure her husband suffered by tampering with his medicines, so he would remain in his coma. Now unable to sin, Bethany was free to cleanse her home and the rest of Stonewall from her husband's and father's corruption.

Bitterness, hate, and self-righteousness grew in her heart as the people ignorantly complimented Bethany on her bravery and determination in the loss of her father and taking care of her husband's farm. Although she didn't like it when she pointed out their faults and her disagreeable nature, they nevertheless admired her faith and inner strength. But this was not the end of Bethany's crusade. Establishing her oldest son, Clarence, as a minister, she was able to bring her beliefs into the hearts of the people. Thanks to Clarence's charisma and weak-willed demeanor from his mother's strict treatment as a child, she eventually turned the town on her side. Within a year, the Salem Witch trials were spreading like wildfire and Stonewall became

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wrapped up in fiasco with Bethany as its inquisitor. Family rivals and those that failed to meet Bethany's expectations were sent to trial and killed. By the tenth victim, however, things took a different turn...

Katharine, Bethany's second youngest child, learned that her best friend was being tried and was hunting for evidence when she came across some documents telling of a land dispute between the two families. Documents in hand and a knife in case she needed to fight back, she hoped to stop her friend's death, but the execution started without her.

"Get her down now," she screamed. Struck with absolute horror, Katharine made a mad dash toward the ladder.

"Are you insane?" Clarence seized his little sister by the waist, dragging her away despite her violent thrashing.

"Maggie's not a witch!"

"The Walmorhes have sinned and must be punished!" Their mother said, trying to keep her temper in check. The rest of the townsfolk caroled in agreement, throwing praises to Mrs. Stone's virtue. "Everyone seems to agree with me, dear."

"That innocent people should die?"

Blood squired from Katharine's upturned nose as her mother slapped her. "It is people like them that destroy our crops and kill our infants." The little girl turned silent. "It is but the righteous alone that keep them from dragging this whole town into darkness."

"Righteous?!" Tears burst from Katharine's eyes, mixing with the unwiped blood from her nose. "You're nothing more than a cold, twisted monster!"

Enraged, Bethany seized the knife and stabbed her right in the heart as the Mists began rolling around the town.

## Current Sketch

Besides her wretched new form, Bethany is growing old (though the Dark Powers do not plan to let her die so easily), and wants her family to continue her legacy, but she is doomed to lose her children before they are fully ready. Whether by death, betrayal, or abandonment, Bethany is powerless to stop this loss.

To make sure she doesn't run out of offspring, every five years, Bethany will become supernaturally pregnant with a human child so the cruel cycle can continue.

## Combat

Bethany usually steers away from combat, but if angry enough and no townsfolk are in sight, she can sprout wings and begin attacking. She will try to make a shot for the person's throat or another vital organ in hopes of ending the fight quickly. Bethany has no combat experience and is prone to make mistakes. If things go bad, however, she is not ashamed to run away.

**Death Shriek (Su):** The Dark Powers have given Bethany this gift whose effects mimic that of a *horn of blasting*. This power can be used three times a day, and is a sonic ability.

## Closing the Borders

Unless someone gets an approval from Bethany or Clarence, anyone attempting to cross the borders will be struck down with a *lightning bolt* as the spell (double the damage if they are wearing metal armor.) The victims must make a Fortitude save (DC 14) or become unconscious. If the target still attempts to cross, more *lightning bolts* will come down until the person turns back or dies.

If one wants to truly get rid of the Darklord, the party must make her remember her childhood. Unknown to anyone, one of the dolls she crafted had survived her father's wrath and if

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shown to Bethany, she will temporarily lower her defenses and start crying. A skilled PC can console her and make her remember her long-lost dreams. (Though she is vulnerable at this time, any attempts to kill her at this point calls for a Dark Powers check.) If successful, the rest of the town will weep along with her for one round before the Mists swallow up the domain and teleport it out of the Ethereal Plane. The citizens will act as if they've been in a dream and will become their normal selves. If not, Bethany will destroy the doll and become even more fanatical.

## The Stone Family

### Clarence Stone

Human Clr4: CR 4; HD 4d8 (30 hp); AC 12; Init +2; Atk. +4 melee, +5 ranged; SA Rebuke Undead; AL LE; Saves Fort +7, Ref +3, Wil +6; Str 13, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 17.

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff (+8), Diplomacy (+10), Intimidate (+8), Knowledge (Local, Stonewall) (+4), Knowledge (Religion) +6; Combat Casting, Run, Scribe Scroll.

*Weapons:* Broad Sword, Rifle.

*Clerical Domains:* Law, War.

*Spells Per Day:* (5/4/2); 0-Detect Magic, Guidance, Inflict Minor Wounds, Resistance, Virtue; 1st--Cause Fear, Command, Comprehend Languages, Make Whole; 2nd--Death Knell, Silence.

*Age:* 24.

Though he has reflected more of his mother's heart, he is still weak-willed and easily manipulated to carry his mother's messages. The fear that she had installed in him affects every moment of his life and a long-buried secret makes his life even worse. He holds a veil of the typical fire-and-brimstone preacher, but is on the verge of a psychological breakdown from his mother's abuse. He is more of a scared and lonely soul when he is away from the church and his mother. The two have a relationship similar to the one Norman Bates had with his mother, except that Bethany is far from dead. Due to his

dual nature and command over the people, it would be easy for players to mistake him as the Darklord (something any DM could have fun with.)

### Teresa Stone-Milton

Human Com2: CR 2; HD 2d4 (6 hp); AC 12; Init +2; Atk +3 ranged; AL LE; Saves Fort +0, Ref +2, Wil +2; Str 9, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 11, Wis 15, Cha 14.

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff (+4), Diplomacy (+4), Gather Information (+6), Knowledge (religion) +2, Knowledge (Stonewall) +4, Listen (+3); Dodge, Ambidexterity.

*Weapons:* Knife, Rifle

*Age:* 23.

Bethany's oldest daughter and accomplice during the Witch Trials. Fiercely loyal, she had rattled on her neighbors and has helped uncover dirty little secrets to try her mother's enemies. She still plays this role even after marrying the judge's son. (She has already failed two Dark Powers checks and is on the same path of the harpy like her mother.) Unlike her mother, Teresa has moments where she can be kind and hospitable in a rather smug kind of way. She is currently expecting her first (and last if the Dark Powers get involved) child.

### Louis Stone

Human Clr2: CR 3; HD 2d8 (14 hp); AC 10; Init +0; Atk. +1 melee; SA Turn Undead; AL LN; Saves Fort +4, Ref +0, Wil +3; Str 11, Dex 8, Con 13, Int 15, Wis 11, Cha 11.

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff (+4), Concentration (+3), Diplomacy (+4), Heal (+2), Knowledge (Stonewall) (+5), Knowledge (religion) (+4), Listen (+4), Move Silently (+1), Sense Motive (+2); Alertness, Run.

*Weapons:* Dagger, Wheel-Lock Pistol.

*Clerical Domain:* Fire.

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*Spells per Day:* (4/2); 0-Create Water, Cure Minor Wounds, Resistance, Guidance; 1st--Cause Fear, Entropic Shield.

*Age:* 20.

Louis is a missionary who has constantly been in the shadow of his older brother and sister. Cowardly and eager to please his family, he is a short, weasely grunt of a man who may truly be one of the kindest members of the family. He is torn between his family and their hypocrisy; and could be a source of help to the PCs if he can get away with it. His most recent missionary assignment was in Richemulot where he was the only sole survivor when the leader of their group called Jacqueline Renier a whore. Louis claims he was out taking a walk when a mysterious assailant killed the other missionaries. The truth was that he was out drinking at a bar when the assailant cast a *sphere of silence* over the room the missionaries were staying in, bond and gagged them, and sent a horde of rats to eat them alive.

## Clarissa Stone

Human Com1: CR 1; HD 1d4 (4 hp); AC 11; Init +1; Atk. +1 ranged; AL LN; Saves Fort +0, Ref +1, Wil +0; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 15 (5 to Stonewall natives).

*Skills and Feats:* Craft (sewing) (+3), Heal (+2), Knowledge (religion) (+3), Knowledge (Stonewall) (+3), Listen (+2), Move Silently (+3), Profession (servant) (+4); Alertness, Run.  
Weapons: Knife.

*Age:* 17.

The other "failure" in the family. Branded a whore by her mother and the rest of the townspeople for being raped, Clarissa has a shattered spirit. She now works as a servant for her mother in hopes of one day lifting her sins. Her only sources for keeping sane are her brother, Louis, and a mysterious stranger who has been privately visiting her.

## Timothy Stone

Human Com2: CR 2; HD 2d4 (8 hp); AC 12; Init +2; Atk +1 melee, +3 ranged; AL LE; Saves

Fort +2, Ref +2, Wil +3; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 10.

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff (+3), Gather Information (+4), Hide (+5), Knowledge (Stonewall) +3, Knowledge (religion) (+3), Listen (+7), Move Silently (+4), Spot (+5); Alertness, Skill Focus (Gather Info).

*Weapons:* Dagger

*Age:* 6.

The youngest of the Stone family, at age six. Bethany has been training the boy as a spy to keep tabs on neighbors and nosy adventurers. Timothy is an emotionless husk of a child that will not react to anything unless told to.

## Edward Stone

Human Com1: CR 1; HD 1d4 (4 hp); AC 11; Init +1; Atk. +1 melee; AL LG; Saves Fort +1, Ref +1, Wil +0; Str 11, Dex 10, Con --, Int 12, Wis 17, Cha 14.

*Skills and Feats:* Craft (woodworking) (+3), Heal (+2), Knowledge (religion) (+2), Knowledge (Stonewall) (+4), Listen (+2), Move Silently (+3), Spot (+3); Alertness, Track.

*Age:* 54.

Edward is Bethany's aging husband. Though he never meant to hurt Bethany, he believed that marriage to a good woman would help cure his urges. When it didn't, he became detached from almost everything in his life. Since Stonewall became a domain, his wife keeps him in a coma. In the real world, Bethany is forced to see his peaceful face and occasional pleasure-filled moans for someone named "White Deer."

As Edward lies seemingly peaceful in his coma, his soul is however bound to the Nightmare Lands. There have been adventurers in this dreamscape who have claimed to see a sanctuary ran by a kindly middle-aged man and his young Abber Nomad acolyte.

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## Katharine Stone

The black sheep of the family. Dead at age 12, no one has however seen her corpse since Stonewall became a domain.

## Adventure Ideas

- ◆ If the PCs have had a past run-in with the drifting domain of Scaena, have it make a little visit to Stonewall. Do the PCs try to stop the towns' members from being killed (knowing they'll find something wrong with the play) or let a bunch of heartless people die?
- ◆ Have one of the PC's befriend a kind-hearted child who has yet to fall under Bethany's spell, and later find out that this child is being beaten by their parents. Since child

beating is legal, will the PCs try to smuggle the child out of Stonewall and risk making a powerful enemy?

- ◆ There seems to be something that Bethany's oldest son is hiding. It is whispered among the harpies that Clarence has inherited his father's urges. He may even become infatuated with one of the male PCs and like Frollo (in the *Hunchback of Notre Dame*), risk damnation to have the PC all to himself.



# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## VULNARA

### SEE NO EVIL, HEAR NO EVIL

By: Hugo Viegas Nascimento  
and Luiz Eduardo Neves Peret

A domain ruled from the underground by a mad gnomish vampire in a quest to regain his senses and keep his faltering grasp of reality.

“If there is in an animated statue’s conscience one single perfume, there is attention... if a new perfume replaces the old, there is memory; a pleasing memory becomes more vivid than an unpleasing one, there is imagination... later on, the creator will confer to this hypothetical being the senses of hearing, taste, sight and, at last, touch. This last sensation will reveal the existence of space and that, in space, it exists in a body; before this final step, all sounds, perfumes and colors were nothing more than simple variations of its own conscience.” (Etienne de Condillac, “Traité des Sensations”)

#### Introduction

Among the major humanoid races found in Ravenloft, perhaps none is more misunderstood than gnomes. Small and agile, with an eccentric and sometimes macabre sense of humor, Ravenloft gnomes are a very pragmatic folk, leading their everyday lives in search of philosophical enlightenment and playing practical (and sometimes morbid) jokes on each other and other races. The gnomish sense of humor is, by human standards, weird at best. If a gnome finds himself deprived of any humor, though, then all those around him have reasons to be afraid. There is in the Land of

Mists one such gnome, a cold-hearted sage, unable to feel the joy of those around him, even the strange joy of gnomish humor. The Land has accepted him this way and welcomed his bitterness, but even though he was finally able to make those around him feel the emptiness he suffered all his life, nowadays any chance of sensing true happiness is completely out of his reach.

#### Cultural Level

Late Chivalric (8) to Renaissance (9).

#### Landscape

Full ecology (temperate forests, hills and mountains plus subterranean).

Vulnara (vul-NAH-rah) is a moderately large, mountainous, ellipsoid domain, about 50 miles from east to west and 80 miles from north to south, surrounded by the Mists. The climate is mildly temperate, neither too cold nor too warm year round. There are two mountain chains, the Hollowhorthe Mountains to the west and the Macabre Hillside to the east. Between the two there is a vast, forested valley named “The Echo” by its inhabitants. The Willow River crosses the middle of the Echo valley from north to south in an almost straight line, dividing the northern settlement, Peine, in two. It then goes south until two-thirds of the Echo, where it abruptly turns east and enters the Macabre Hillside. The southeastern side of the valley is dominated by the city of Vyttriola. The Dolor River completes the scenario, coming from the west and supplying Vyttriola with water and fresh fish.

The Hollowhorthe Mountains, with their high and snow-covered peaks, guard the remains of what looks like a once vast gnomish underground kingdom, with many ruined



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palaces and fortresses, as well as scattered, uncharted villages, inhabited mostly by elusive and highly xenophobic rock gnomes, with at least one svirfneblin community within the deepest labyrinthine tunnels. There are no palaces in the Echo's cities, although some buildings in both cities can be considered majestic: the School of Image, an old, almost abandoned building, which houses what is left of an once famous academy for illusionists, in Peine, and the Haven Basilica in Vyttriola, main temple of the Order of the Relievers. Deep in the Macabre Hillside there are a few ruined and (as believed by many) haunted gnomish cities and the infamous Fang, a naturally built stalactite-shaped fortress. No gnome would willingly visit such places.

In the forested part of the valley there are few wild animals, mostly bears, foxes, rodents and deer. Wolves are almost unheard of. Within the western mountains, there are few natural underground threats, like spiders of various sizes, oozes and molds. The eastern side, though, it's another matter entirely: goblins, ettercaps and large spiders roam about, and who knows what else has made its lair in the deepest caves. Also, geists, ghosts, ghouls and other undead (mostly people who were condemned to the Stone Gardens and became victims of the local menaces) stay near the sites of their deaths.

In any subterranean environment, bands of tactyles represent one of the worst threats. Some of them are from the original batch created by Kasselheim, having increased their wits and devised hunting strategies. Some lair in the Fang, while others live near the entrance to the tunnel in the Stone Gardens, ready to attack anything that moves. When hunger drives them further, a few might come to the Echo and perhaps even near one of the cities, although it is a very unlikely occurrence.

## Major Settlements

Peine (pop. 2,000), Vyttriola (pop. 3,500).

## The Folk

Population – 7,000. Rock Gnomes 60%, Humans 25%, Svirfneblin 10%, Elves 2%, Forest Gnomes 1%, Goblins 1%, Others 1%. Languages – Vulnaran\*, Gnome, Terran, Undercommon, Sylvan, Elf. Religions – the Order of the Reliever \*, Gnome Pantheon.

Gnomes form the vast majority of the population both under the western hills and in the cities of the valley. They have a sense of apathy and dullness about them that is not common to gnomes from other places. Most of them spend their time either working in gem mines or developing new inventions in laboratories, most of which are concentrated in a single place, known to all as the Workshops, located on the southern outskirts of Vyttriola and about a mile away from the Macabre Hillside's first elevations.

There are few Vulnaran gnomes who volunteer to study magic, as Illusion (the gnomish-favored magical art in other domains and worlds) is considered futile. They still have the natural gnome ability to cast cantrips, however they avoid using such tricks, at least in public. In the Vyttriolan Workshops, magic has been almost entirely banned and gnomes work hard with steam and metal, fire and elaborated tools, trying to perfect engines and strange devices. Their inventions are sometimes very dangerous to themselves. Their precautions and safety measures are always lacking and the risk of major explosions is constant. However, they keep working hard and seem unconcerned with being more careful.

Vulnaran gnomes might be mistaken for a dwarven subrace, as they are a hard-working lot, mining the mountains and making some marvels of stoneworking and gem cutting, but seem never satisfied with the results of their craft, and grumble to themselves most of the time. As noted above, they are not as cheerful as in other worlds, and several gnomes living in the cities regularly attend the sorrowful cult in the Haven Basilica. The gnome miners, who live under the mountains, visit the surface world only

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to trade their jewels with surface gnomes for food and inventions, as the mountains have scarcity of food. They will not trade with non-gnomes, though.

The svirfneblin live in the outer layers of the deeper mines and are more social with their neighbors than in other places, as they are in more immediate danger with the constant attacks by tactyles (see below). No one considered civilized or smart will establish residence near the eastern Hills, as those are caves and precipices are believed to be haunted by the ghost of the legendary gnome alchemist and transmuter Kasselheim Blightlyng, who lived alone in the Fang Fortress. The truth is far worse.

Aside from the two major gnome populations, there is a very small community of forest gnomes in the forest. They are shy and reclusive as in other realms, but do not hate humans as the gnomes under the mountains do. Close to their hidden village there is an elven community. These elves are very rarely seen and some humans even believe them to be a legend.

Humans are a lot scarcer in this land than in others, totaling less than one-third of the two urban areas' total population. They are mostly farmers, hunters and herders, a strong people, with hair color varying from deep black to light brown, and eyes usually light brown.

## The Law

Meritocratic independent settlements. Both major surface cities have town councils composed of gnomes and humans at a 4:1 rate. Traditions count more than written laws. Mostly, "tradition" means common sense sayings, like "Don't talk about Evil, and Evil will not visit you", and "Spit no poisons, swallow no poisons." Council members are appointed for commendable socially-oriented actions, and usually stay in charge until they retire at old age. As one might expect, human council members change faster than gnomes.

Whenever there is a serious crime (a rare occurrence indeed), people don't even bother to summon mob justice. If the suspect is arrested, they simply send him, unarmed, to the well-guarded mouth of a cave known as the Stone Gardens, a deep labyrinthine path through the Macabre Hillside, that ultimately leads to the Fang. If the person can survive for a week without coming back (there's only one way in and out and there are always guards there, 3rd – 5th level warriors with chain mail, bastard swords, crossbows and sometimes muskets with bayonets) then the person is considered "innocent in the eyes of the Gods" and freed. Most people sent there, either guilty or innocent, have never come back. Of those few who survived, most have been committed to the Reliever's asylum, their sanity lost forever.

From an outsider's point of view, gnomish behavior under the Hollowhorthe Mountains might be considered "dwarvish" in some aspects. The gnomes live in working guilds that are more important to them than their family trees. They are obstinate when pursuing their goal of perfection and as long as the "outsider gnomes" don't stay in their way, that's all right to live as neighbors. They do not even consider the possibility of trading with humans, who they greatly mistrust for some long-forgotten reason (humans suffer from OR 5 when dealing with these gnomes; most other non-gnome humanoids have OR 3 to them).

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The gnome guildsmen meet once a year in the largest fortress still in use, and discuss problems related to the perfecting of their skills and the movements of the few, scattered goblins and the dread tactyles. They greatly fear the Fang and don't appreciate the "judgement" methods used by their cousins in the cities, as they believe their neighbors are irritating what they believe to be the spirit of Kasselheim Blightlyng, which might still haunt the Eastern caves.

In Vyttriola, the Order of the Reliever has built the magnificent Haven Basilica and is dedicated to eradicate pain and suffering through self-sacrifice. There is a summarized description of the sect below. Aside from these strange-looking priestesses, most people look normal enough. People in general are cordial but look a bit distant and aloof. They are not xenophobic and suspicious like people in other domains, but prefer to keep to themselves. Gossip is not a popular form of entertainment, even among gnomes, and there is a lingering feeling of apathy tainting the air all the time.

## Trade and Diplomacy

Resources – potatoes, carrots, spices, salmon, trout, cherries, apples, peas, sheep, sheep dairy, salt, gems, copper, brass, gold, silver, platinum, furniture, inventions. Coinage – engine (gp), steampipe (sp), blast (cp). Bartering is a common practice between the gnomes of the surface and those from underground.

Vulnaran merchants seem to have little interest in expanding their market, although new buyers for their inventions (who could genuinely understand and appreciate them) would be certainly welcome. Underground and forest gnomes avoid contact with foreigners as much as they can.

## Characters

**Classes** – fighters, clerics, bards, rangers, druids.  
**Skills** – Alchemy, Appraise, Balance, Bluff, Craft (armorsmithing, book-binding, blacksmithing, calligraphy, carpentry, clockmaking, cobbling, gemcutting, gunsmithing, leatherworking, locksmithing, stonemasonry, tattooing, trapmaking, weaponsmithing, weaving), Diplomacy, Handle Animal, Heal, Knowledge (local, nature, religion), Perform (dance, flute, harp), Pick Pocket, Profession (apothecary, engineer, farmer, fisher, herbalist, herdsman, miner, scribe), Ride, Sense Motive, Wilderness Lore.  
**Feats** – Alertness, Dodge (plus derivatives), Fearless, Iron Will, Jaded, Skill Focus (any Craft, Knowledge or Profession).

Special: single-class rogues should be avoided. Spellcasting classes are rare, and illusionists are the rarest of all. A good percentage of NPCs have at least a few levels as experts. Aristocrats are rarer.

## The Order of the Reliever

The Order of the Reliever was founded ages ago by an unnamed woman who apparently was able to commune with the Higher Spirits through meditation, fasting and scarification. She taught others the importance of self-sacrifice and the little meaning a material life has when compared to the happiness of taking care of others.

The Order accepts only females, but they can be of any race. There is no distinction between sisters of different races, and they humbly accept any services they are assigned to perform. Mostly, the Order takes care of the sick and those who suffer accidents or become victims of wild animals or monsters. They take vows of chastity and poverty, but charge for healing, transferring all funds to the Order.

The most distinguishing feature of this order is it that the higher-level sisters flagellate themselves constantly. They start their careers as

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normal clerics, but after a while they begin to scourge themselves as a way to find purification of body and soul. Some become monks, developing a sense of self-improvement through difficult tests, while others enter the higher ranks of the Order, tattooing their bodies as signs of their improvement, wearing body piercings and needles, shaving their heads and bodies.

**Deity Alignment:** Neutral Good (priestesses can be of any non-chaotic, non-evil alignment)

**Symbol:** ring of thorns.

**Favored Weapon:** whip or scourge

**Domains:** Good, Healing, Protection.

## Enlightened Reliever

This prestige class is reserved for those who advance in ranks in the Order of the Reliever. Their bodies become vessels of purity and healing.

**Requirements:** To qualify as an Enlightened Reliever (EnR), the character must fulfill all the following criteria:

**Race:** any humanoid female.

**Ability Scores:** Constitution 13+

**Alignment:** any non-chaotic, non-evil.

**Skills:** Heal 8+ ranks, Profession (herbalist) 8+ ranks.

**Feats:** Great Fortitude, Skill Focus (Heal)

**Deity:** The Reliever

**Spells:** must be able to cast divine spells of 3rd level or higher.

**Class Skills:** The Enlightened Reliever's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Alchemy (Int), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (nature), Knowledge (religion), Profession (Wis), Scry (Int) and Spellcraft (Int).

**Skill points at each Level:** 2 + Intelligence modifier.

Class Level	BAB	F	R	W	Special	Spells
1 <sup>st</sup>	+0	+2	+0	+2	Flagellation, turn undead	+1 level of existing class
2 <sup>nd</sup>	+1	+3	+0	+3	Purity of body	
3 <sup>rd</sup>	+2	+3	+1	+3	Transfer wounds	+1 level of existing class
4 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+4	+1	+4	Still mind	
5 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+4	+1	+4	Greater Flagellation I	+1 level of existing class
6 <sup>th</sup>	+4	+5	+2	+5	Diamond body	
7 <sup>th</sup>	+5	+5	+2	+5	Slippery Mind	+1 level of existing class
8 <sup>th</sup>	+6/+1	+6	+2	+6	Greater Flagellation II	
9 <sup>th</sup>	+6/+1	+6	+3	+6	Mind of steel	+1 level of existing class
10 <sup>th</sup>	+7/+2	+7	+3	+7	Timeless body	

## Class Features

### Weapon and Armor Proficiencies:

Enlightened Relievers are proficient with all simple weapons and the whip. They do not receive any proficiency with armor or shields. Note that armor check penalties for armor heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move

Silently, Pick Pockets and Tumble. Also, Swim checks suffer a –1 penalty for every 5 pounds of armor and equipment carried.

**Spells:** At first level and every other level thereafter, the Enlightened Reliever receives an additional level of her existing cleric class. She counts these new levels along with her cleric levels when determining the caster level for her

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spells. She does not, however, gain any other level-related benefit from her previous class.

**Turn Undead:** The Enlightened Reliever may turn undead creatures adding her prestige class level to her cleric level.

**Flagellation:** in order to receive her wondrous powers, the Enlightened Reliever must hurt herself. When meditating for spells every day, she must whip herself, pierce her own body or cause some other form of self-inflicted suffering. This causes her 1hp of damage for each level of spells she can prepare. For example, a Clr5/EnR3 casts spells as a 7th level cleric, with access to four levels of spells, so she must cause herself 4hp of damage through flagellation. This damage cannot be cured with magic, only through rest. At every odd level, the Enlightened Reliever's OR increases by one when dealing with non-Vulnarans.

**Purity of Body:** At 2nd level, the Enlightened Reliever gains control over her own immune system, becoming immune to all diseases except magical diseases such as mummy rot and lycanthropy.

**Transfer Wounds:** At 3rd level, the Enlightened Reliever can transfer wounds from another creature to her own body, effectively absorbing them through her touch. The Enlightened Reliever can transfer up to twice her level in hit points of damage each day, and she can spread this healing ability out among several uses. This works as a paladin's lay-on hands ability on the subject, and she can naturally heal her newly acquired damage (which is the same as the subject's original wounds) at the rate of 1hp per minute. Transfer Wounds is a supernatural ability.

**Still Mind:** At 4th level, the Enlightened Reliever gains a competence +2 bonus to her saves against Enchantment and Illusion spells. This is a result of her intense training and meditation.

**Greater Flagellation I:** At 5th level, the Enlightened Reliever begins to tattoo her own body with symbols that relate to her rank in the

Order and also serve as protective spell-like glyphs. She gains a +1 natural armor bonus due to her tattoos and can imprint a single 1st level divine spell in one tattoo. The spell must be chosen at the moment of the tattoo creation and cannot be changed later. Activating the spell is a standard action and requires touching the tattoo with one free hand and allows an attack of opportunity. The spell can be used once per day. Most Enlightened Relievers imprint one of their domain spells on this tattoo.

**Diamond Body:** At 6th level, the Enlightened Reliever becomes immune to all poisons, except magic ones. This is a supernatural ability gained through intense training.

**Slippery Mind:** At 7th level, the Enlightened Reliever has achieved such a level of self-consciousness that she has a second chance of avoiding spells and effects that would otherwise control or compel her. Whenever she is subject to an enchantment spell or effect and fails her save, she can attempt another save one round later.

**Greater Flagellation II:** At 8th level, the Enlightened Reliever makes yet another special tattoo, taking a whole day. She cannot sleep, talk, eat or drink while creating the tattoo, and it drains her of all her spells, which she can only prepare after she has rested for 8 hours and fed appropriately. This tattoo increases her natural armor to +2 and makes her immune to permanent Constitution drain. From now on she always treats permanent Constitution drain as temporary damage, and regains lost Constitution points normally.

**Mind of Steel:** At 9th level, the Enlightened Reliever has complete control over her own mind. She receives a +4 competence bonus to all Will saves. This bonus stacks with her Still Mind bonus.

**Timeless Body:** At 10th level, the Enlightened Reliever no longer suffers ability penalties for aging and cannot be magically aged. Any penalties she may have already suffered remain in place. Bonuses still accrue and the

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Enlightened Reliever still dies of old age when her time is up.

## Darklord of Vulnara

### Kasselheim Blightlyng

**Male Old Gnomish Vampire, Trs7/Alp7: CR17; Small Undead (3ft. tall);** HD 12d12; HP 78hp; Init.: +9 (+5 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd.: 30ft.; AC: 25 (+1 size, +5 Dex, +2 cloak, +7 natural), touch 16, flat-footed 20; Atk.: +9 melee (1d3+1 x2, claws), +10/+5 melee (1d4+1, +1 dagger) or +13/+8 ranged (1d4+1, +1 dagger); SA: animal domination, blood drain, create tactile, dread alchemy, improved grab, mocking grim 1d8, sense drain, spells, tactile control, undead control; SQ: undead, blindsight, damage reduction 25/+2, familiar (rat), fast heal 5, immunities, resistances, sense loss, spectral form, spider climb, turn resistance +5, vulnerabilities; AL CE; SV: Fort +8, Ref +11, Will +13; Str 12 Dex 20 Con – Int 24 Wis 16 Cha 16.

*Skills and Feats:* Alchemy +24 (+22)\*, Bluff +16, Concentration +17, Craft (clockmaking) +14, Decipher Script +16, Heal +12, Hide +17, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (Arcana) +12, Knowledge (Geography) +12, Knowledge (Local) +12, Knowledge (Undead Lore) +12, Knowledge (Nature) +12, Knowledge (Religion) +12, Listen +15, Move Silently +13, Scry +17, Search +11, Sense Motive +11, Spellcraft +21, Spot +13, Use Magic Device +12, Wilderness Lore +8; Alertness, Brew Potion, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Spell Focus (Transmutation). Known Formulae: 1st – Alchemical Homunculus, Corporeal Purifier, Dread Quintessence (\*), Emotional Purgative, Memory Coagulant; 2nd – Philosophical Child, Philosophical Purifier, Rotting Salve (\*); 3rd – Enlightened Child.

**Languages:** Vulnaran\*, Draconic, Dwarven Gnome, Elven, Goblin, Undercommon.

*Wizard Spells per Day:* 5/7/6/5/3 (extra daily Transmutation spell included). Base save DC 17 + spell level, 19 + spell level for Transmutation spells. Prohibited Schools: Enchantment and Illusion.

*Spellbook:* 0 – all; 1st – Burning Hands, Enlarge, Erase, Identify, Jump, Magic Missile, Ray of Enfeeblement, Reduce, Shield, Unseen Servant; 2nd – Alter Self, Arcane Lock, Bull's Strength, Cat's Grace, Detect Thoughts, Fog Cloud, Knock, Melf's Acid Arrow, Pyrotechnics, Web; 3rd – Dispel Magic, Explosive Runes, Fireball, Fly, Greater Magic Weapon, Haste, Keen Edge, Lightning Bolt, Slow; 4th – Bestow Curse, Detect Scrying, Dimension Door, Ice Storm, Minor Globe of Invulnerability, Polymorph Other, Polymorph Self, Scrying;

*Signature Possessions:* cloak of natural armor +2, horn of evil, wand of ice storm.

## Appearance

Kasselheim Blightlyng has never been a cheerful gnome, but undeath has made him even worse. His apparently mummified face is locked in a perpetual, sneering mockery of a smile. He is over 250 years old, and his already small body seems to have shriveled even more than he was in life, making him shorter by almost five inches. He is always cloaked in the shroud he wore the day he bargained for eternal life and received eternal suffering.

## Background

A few centuries ago, in another world, there was a vast nation where rock gnomes were the largest population. They regularly traded with other humanoid races both from the surface world and the neighboring caves, as well as with virtually anyone who could afford to accept their sometimes excessive sense of humor. Gnomish practical jokes were a constant, and they made extensive use of illusions in their everyday life. It is not that they were less than serious when they needed, but they surely knew how to take the best of life.



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At least, most of them. Since his early days, Kasselheim was uncomfortable with his relatives and neighbors. He saw how other races talked when gnomes were not hearing, and felt that his race deserved more respect, but only if all gnomes realized that they should respect others. Among all gnomish traits Kasselheim did not like, illusion was perhaps the worst. He thought illusion was just an empty deception that made gnomes untrustworthy, even to themselves. He was unable to understand that illusion and good sense of humor are part of gnomish nature as much as the absence of sleep is part of elven nature, or the affinity to stones is part of dwarven nature.

Unfortunately for him, his family members and neighbors did not notice the tension growing in him and decided to “help poor young Kasselheim fit in”, so they played with him most of the time, trying to make him “understand the prank”, so to speak. They pestered him with practical jokes and tricks for years, always failing to notice how darker his mood became after each prank, and how disgusted he grew every day.

Kasselheim grew up a bitter gnome. He shunned illusion ever more, refused to use or learn it, and even gave up his own innate cantrips. He was interested in magic, but something that looked more “material and solid”. He chose Transmutation as his specialty, defying a family tradition of centuries, and almost got expelled from his house. After a while, his parents and neighbors came to accept that he was indeed different and tried to live on, even though some of them always had dreamed that Kasselheim would one day join the ranks of the School of Image, the local academy for illusionists. Instead, Kasselheim left home to study in the wilderness of the deepest caves, away from their trading routes and mines.

After a few years, a flood, so strong as no one had ever seen before, sent large quantities of water down the subterranean passages, inundating several caves and destroying buildings in its wake. The gnomes

decided to leave the unstable caves for the surface, establishing a community near their forest gnome cousins. They counted their losses in more than they first had suspected, and many families grieved. The Blightlyng family lost all hope to ever see Kasselheim again.

Unbeknownst to them, he had survived, and so had several others, although they might wish otherwise. Kasselheim was obsessed with finding ways to turn gnomes away from Illusion and trickery, to interest them in more “solid” things. He had begun to study Alchemy and Anatomy, focusing on the nature of matter and how natural senses operated, how they captured impressions from the environment and generated emotional responses, and how illusionary magic acted against them, blocking a real consciousness of reality. Unfortunately for him, he dwelt too deeply in his obsessive ways, caring little for safety and accident-preventive measures. One day, an alchemic accident resulted in an explosion.

His body burned, his eyes and ears bleeding from the flash and loud noise. He healed slowly over the course of many months, eventually noticing that something was not quite right with him. His own senses began to falter and fail, and he was horrified, for without senses, he believed, he would lose his grasp of reality. He tried to develop ways to emulate his senses, and eventually found a way to drain senses and a few memories from others through the use of new, dark magic.

He realized he needed subjects to experiment on, and that was when the flood came. He took it as a sign of approval from “someone in a higher place” and took the opportunity to kidnap some survivors from the disaster. He used his formulae to change his own touch, becoming a sense-draining creature. He tortured his hostages and experimented with them, his almost deaf ears conveniently shut to their pleas for help, his near-blind eyes unable to see their suffering. Even when his senses were temporarily restored after the draining attacks, he kept a cold heart and a mute, smiling

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expression. His experiments resulted in the creation of the dread tactyles.

After a while, some gnomes tried to reestablish lairs in the caves, and to mine the precious gems there once again. That was when tales came from the ruins, about weird creatures, immune to illusions and capable of blinding and deafening their victims with a touch. Some terrified miners told stories of monsters with tentacles, disguised as robed gnomes, that approached the unwary in dark passages and suddenly attacked. Some stories went even further, saying that some of the monsters looked very much like relatives and friends who had disappeared during the flood.

The community's elders became suspicious and sent warriors and spellcasters to check the area, but almost all vanished. Those who returned told even weirder tales, of fellows going down in combat and returning as monstrosities after a few days, and of a chamber filled with black furry cocoons. Members of other races reported disappearances, too.

The gnomes made a deal with humans, elves and dwarves, forming a large party to investigate the deepest caves. There, they found a gargantuan stalactite, carved with columns and windows, as a fortress hanging from the cave ceiling. The place, an ancient (and thought to be abandoned) ruined fortress known to gnomish historians as the Fang, was infested with tactyles, some from gnomes and some from other humanoids. The battle was terrible, but in the end, at the cost of many lives, the party thought they might have a chance. Then Kasselheim himself emerged from the fortress, using his deadliest alchemical formulae and spells to maximum effect. He turned the fates of the battle once again, and even though he recognized former friends and even some relatives among his enemies, he captured them to start his dread experiments once again.

Then, one of his sisters, who was a priestess, prayed to Gnomish Gods for salvation and attacked him, although she was too tired and hurt. As the mad wizard approached her,

intending to drain her senses and turn her into a tactyle, she threw herself off a cliff, cursing him: "May this wicked smile be stuck on your face forever and your petty robbery of another's joy of life serve as your own punishment! May you never be heard asking for mercy, as you never listen to another's pleas!"

Suddenly, an earthquake shook the cave and Kasselheim was hit by falling stones. When he awoke, his tactyles were there as before, but something had changed. His senses deteriorated a lot faster than before, and he was unable to speak, his face stuck in a rigid, mocking smile.

## Current Sketch

Kasselheim is completely dependant on other creatures' senses and must constantly feed. His curse made him a particularly nasty type of gnomish vampire. His senses are nonexistent by themselves, except for his sense of touch, and even that is limited to feel pain and other unpleasant sensations. Right after he feeds, he can see, hear, smell and taste perfectly, but he slowly loses sensations once again, and the only remaining thing is the urge to feel once again. In life, he prized the five senses as means of communicating with the world, and now he craves them more then ever.

His inability to move by day and the isolation of his lair are two major hindrances to his constant pursue of sensations. Within a vast domain, he is limited to a small area. His tactyles are immune to his sense-draining touch, so they are pretty much useless to him and also competitors, however he remembers all too well that his minions protected him when his enemies first came to fight against him. Therefore, he keeps them around, as hated yet necessary pets. Also, their familiar faces remind him of his life and his dream of changing gnomish lifestyle forever.

Kasselheim rarely stays too long away from the Fang. Once he became negligent and bold, trying to find his way along the tunnels, even though his senses were failing him. A sunbeam through a hole in a cave burned his left

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arm and he still bears the scar. He has learned to be more careful, but he cannot deny his own reckless nature.

## Combat

Kasselheim is a clever opponent, using his magic and minions to disable his enemies before moving to attack. However, when his senses fail him, he becomes impatient and may attack with ferocity.

**Undead:** Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, subdual damage and disease. Not subject to critical hits, ability damage, energy drain or death from massive damage.

**Animal Domination (Su):** Gaze attack, Will save DC 19. This ability functions as the spell Dominate Person, but only works on animals.

**Blood Drain (Ex):** bite, 1d4 points of permanent Constitution drain (see “Vampire” in the Monster Manual). Different from other gnomish vampires, Kasselheim cannot create other vampires; instead, any creature reduced to 0 in Constitution dies and becomes a ghoul after three nights. These creatures are completely under Kasselheim’s control.

**Create Tactyle (Su):** any victim of Kasselheim’s sense drain attack has a chance of becoming a tactyle. After being deprived of the senses of smell, sight, hearing and taste, the victim must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 19) or begin the dread transformation, enclosing itself in a silky cocoon. At the end of one week, a new tactyle emerges from the victim’s cocoon. The new tactyle is completely under Kasselheim’s command. A success means that the victim will not be turned into the dread abomination, but the damage suffered remains (see “Sense drain”, below).

**Improved Grab (Ex):** to use this ability, Kasselheim must hit a Huge or smaller creature with both claw attacks. If he gets a hold, he can drain senses on the following round. He receives a +4 bonus to his grapple checks.

**Mocking Grin (Su):** Kasselheim’s features are perpetually twisted into a leering grin. Once every 10 minutes, a single living creature within 30 feet who looks at his face must succeed at a Will save (DC 19) or burst into uncontrollable laughter for 1d6 rounds, suffering 1d8 points of damage per round. Regardless of succeeding or failing the save, the same creature becomes immune to this attack for one day.

**Sense Drain (Su):** Kasselheim drains senses with his cursed touch. If he gets a hold of his victim using his improved grab ability, on the next round and every other round thereafter, Kasselheim attempts to drain one sense, in the following order: Taste, Smell, Hearing and Sight. The victim may try to resist each draining attempt with a Fortitude save (DC 19). A success mean that Kasselheim must try again, always with an interval of one round between attempts. For each sense drained, the victim suffers 1d4 points of permanent Dexterity drain. The process is quite painful: the tongue swallows, the nose burns inside, ears drop and fold, eyelids shut and attach themselves. Even if Kasselheim is separated from the victim, the damage to the senses is permanent until the victim receives a Remove Curse and a Remove Disease, then the lost Dexterity becomes temporary damage and may be healed accordingly. A Restoration spell heals the Dexterity drain but does not restore the lost senses. A victim deprived of all four senses may become a tactyle (see “Create Tactyle”, above).

**Tactyle Control (Su):** Kasselheim automatically controls any tactyle within 60 feet.

**Undead Control (Su):** Kasselheim may control or rebuke undead as a 12th-level evil cleric.

**Blindsight (Ex):** Even when Kasselheim loses his absorbed senses, he is able to discern the presence of all corporeal creatures and objects within 60 feet. Beyond that range, all creatures and objects are considered to have total concealment. His blindsight is not based on hearing or smell, but on his incredibly enhanced sense of touch, which allows him to perceive subtle movements in the air, vibrations through

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earth and water, and heat. He usually knows when he is exposed to light or under darkness, and where the borders between the two are.

**Immunities (Ex):** Kasselheim is immune to all metallic weapons, which pass harmlessly through his body, regardless of the weapon's enchantment, except for silvered weapons. If a magic weapon causes any additional damage he may still be subject to that damage. He automatically disbelieves all illusions and usually targets anyone who dares cast an illusion spell in his presence.

**Resistances (Ex):** Kasselheim has acid, cold, electricity and fire resistance 20.

**Spectral Form (Su):** As a standard action, Kasselheim can assume the form of a globe of purple light. He is incorporeal in this form and can remain like this indefinitely, flying with a speed of 20 and perfect maneuverability.

**Spider Climb (Ex):** Kasselheim can climb vertical surfaces made of inorganic material, such as stone, metal or earth, as if under a Spider Climb spell.

**Sense Loss (Ex):** Kasselheim is subject to a continuous loss of his natural senses. Even though he enjoys blindsight, the loss of his senses still causes a devastation to his enormous ego. After he has fed on a victim's senses, he retains them for a day per hit die of his victim. At the end of this period, Kasselheim begins to suffer disorientation, and loses his sense of Taste. He then loses one sense every 24 hours: Smell, Hearing and Sight. He usually tries to find a suitable victim before his time expires.

**Vulnerabilities (Ex):** Different from other gnomish vampires, Kasselheim is not affected by a silver-backed mirror. If presented to a jewel, clockwork device or piece of machinery with strong conviction, he must make a Will save (DC = presenter's Charisma check) or stare at the item with fascination for 2d4 rounds. This effect ends immediately if he is attacked.

Kasselheim is greatly impaired in his movements because he cannot enter a home or other private building unless he raps once at the door and a living creature responds. He needs not be invited in, but his presence must be acknowledged by some living creature inside after he raps at the door. Also, direct sunlight destroys his body if he is exposed and cannot move away within one round. Different from a regular gnomish vampire, if Kasselheim's body is destroyed by sunlight, he immediately turns into his incorporeal form and must reach his chambers in the Fang within 2 hours, as if he had been reduced to 0 hit points.

A silver spike through his heart slays him instantly, but he returns to life if the spike is removed. The only sure way to kill him permanently after having staked him is to cut off his clawed hands and boil them in a volcanic hot spring for 24 hours (which is difficult enough, since such springs are extremely rare), then replace his eyes with precious gems (minimum 100gp each) and only then transport his inert body to a place under direct sunlight and block his spectral form from leaving for a full hour, with some spell or device able to trap incorporeal beings. This process differs somewhat from the standard method of killing a gnomish vampire.

**Skills:** When he loses the sense of smell, his Alchemy drops to +22.

**Dread Alchemy:** Kasselheim has dabbled a lot into Dread Alchemy, has successfully twisting some formulae originally intended to heal. His Dread Alchemy deals with negative energy as much as normal Alchemy deals with positive energy. His altered formulae are:

*Dread Quintessence [General]:* same as Quintessence, except that it concentrates negative energy and causes 3d8 points of damage to any living subject that ingests or is injected with this formula (Fortitude save DC 22 for half damage). Any undead creature who ingests or is injected with Dread Quintessence heals 3d8 points of damage.

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*Rotting Salve [General]:* same as Regenerative Salve, except that contact with living tissue is corrosive, causing immediate gangrene and a permanent drain of 1d4 points of Constitution (Fortitude save DC22 to negate). The gangrenous tissue continues to inflict 1d4 points of permanent Constitution drain each day until the victim dies or the tissue is amputated. Kasselheim sometimes uses flasks of this deadly salve as missile, grenade-like weapons. The DM should determine if the salve enters in contact with a specific body part. Contact with the head usually means instant death. Any undead creature can use this salve to reattach a severed limb, just as a living creature uses Regenerative Salve, or to attach a limb from a corpse. In this case, the restored limb never becomes gangrenous as a result of the procedure.

## New Monster: Tactyle

**CR4; SZ Small Aberration (3ft. tall);** HD 4d8+4; HP 22; Init. +3 (Dex), Spd. 20ft., climb 15ft., AC 19 (+3 Dex, +7 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 17; Atk.: +5 melee (1d6, 2 claws); SA improved grab, infection, sense drain; SQ acid and cold resistance 10, adherent secretion, improved blindsight, immunities, sense feed, tough skin; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +5; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 5, Wis 12, Cha 4. Adv: 5-8HD (small), 9-11HD (medium-size)

*Skills and Feats:* Balance +4, Climb +8, Hide +8, Move Silently +8; Weapon Finesse (claw)

**Appearance:** At first sight, a tactyle resembles a regular humanoid covered in a furry, oversized and double-or triple-folded black or dark brown robes, with no apparent hands or feet coming out of the cloth. It keeps its head bowed and moves in near silence, dragging along a large bundle of its “robes”. When it senses a potential victim or suffers an attack, however, the tactyle reveals its true form.

Its upper half resembles a humanoid, but his lower half is similar to that of a carrion crawler. Its arms are cylindric, trunk-like, ending abruptly in three-clawed hands and feet. Its hand palms and centipede feet constantly secrete a

highly adherent substance, allowing the creature to stick to walls and even to cling from the ceiling. They also use its sticky claws to grab their foes and drain their senses in a slow, painful process.

When attacking, the Tactyle straightens its head, which largely resembles the creature’s former face, with eyes, nostrils and mouth shut and locked in an expression of eternal anguish and pain. Such a sight may be the cause for a Horror save. If a character viewing the Tactyle recognizes a former friend or relative, the save DC raises accordingly. As the creature attacks, it usually emits a low-pitched moan. All in all, the tactyle looks alien, but its face still keeps the resemblance of its former life, only adding to the horror of the attack.

The tactyle is a foul yet sad creature, driven solely by intense pain and an insane hunger for the sensations it has been deprived of. Having only the supernaturally enhanced sense of tact to guide them, these creatures wander endlessly through a colorless, silent world with no smell, no tastes and no real emotions at all, just the need to find the next victim and absorb his/her feelings. It makes little noise when walking, except for a light rasping sound, similar to the scratch of soft fur when being carelessly dragged about.

Any attempt to communicate with such creatures either through spell or psionics calls for a Madness save, for their thoughts are continuously focused on the emotional pain of having lost their senses, added to the physical pain of their transformation, and their new nature is too alien for a normal mind to comprehend. Even if the communication is somehow established, the creature imparts only sensations of pain and suffering, partial and confused memories of its former life and the transformation. At the DM’s discretion, this might be cause for another Horror check, with a higher DC if the character attempting contact is of the same race that originated the monster.

**Combat:** The tactyle usually attacks only to feed, but unfortunately it is always hungry for

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more senses and feelings. It uses its claws in an attempt to grab its opponent and feed on the opponent's senses, rapidly disabling most enemies.

**Improved Grab (Ex):** In order to use this, the Tactyle must succeed in two claw attacks on the same round. It firmly holds to its victim, and all his opposed grapple checks are made with a +4 bonus to its rolls.

**Sense Drain (Su):** When the Tactyle manages to use its Improved Grab ability, it immediately establishes a painful "sensorial connection" with the victim. If the victim does not free herself from the adhesive embrace (an opposed grapple check, see above), the next round the Tactyle will try to feed on one of the victim's senses, in the following order: Taste, Smell, Hearing and Sight. The Tactyle is unable to feed on tact. To resist the drain, the victim must succeed in a Fortitude check every other round (DC15). With each failure, the victim suffers the loss of one sense. The organs associated with the sense swell or shut and become useless, and the extreme pain of the draining causes 1d3 points of temporary Dexterity damage. The senses come back gradually, along with the respective ability points.

**Infection (Su):** If the victim loses all four senses, she must attempt a new Fortitude save (DC 15). A success indicates that the senses and the lost Dexterity points come back at half-rate (one point every two days) and the victim has permanently lost 1d3 Dexterity points and the use of one sense (randomly chosen). Meanwhile, the victim lies helpless on the ground, smeared in the creature's oozy secretion. A failed save means the victim has been totally engulfed and the secretion hardens, turning into a cocoon. During the next days, the cocoon sprouts black furry hair. After one week, the cocoon opens and a new tactyle comes out, its cocoon becoming his hairy natural "cloak". This way the creature spreads its terrible, cursed disease through humanoids. There is no record of animal-shaped tactyles, and animals usually die if they fail the final Fortitude save. The newly created tactyle apparently has no memory of its former life.

**Improved Blindsight (Ex):** Although the tactyle is deprived of sight, hearing and smell, it can detect creatures, objects and heat sources through its highly enhanced sense of tact. The tactyle can even sense when it has been exposed to a heat-generating light source, so that it can determine where shadows are. It usually tries to hide in shadowy areas. It can also distinguish all creatures within 40 feet around itself as a normally sighted creature would. Invisible creatures have no advantages against the tactyle within 40 feet of it. The tactyle cannot, however, detect creatures that are incorporeal or ethereal, unless they somehow manifest in the physical world. This ability otherwise works as regular blindsight. The tactyle never makes Listen or Spot checks; it either perceives all creatures within range or is effectively blind and deaf if they are beyond that range.

**Adherent secretion (Ex):** The tactyle continuously secretes a strongly adhesive substance from its underbelly, its centipede feet and the pads in the center of its claws. This secretion adds a bonus of +4 to their Climb checks and their opposed grapple checks (in the case of a small-sized tactyle, this bonus counters the usual size penalty to grapple checks).

**Sense Feed (Su):** As the tactyle drains senses, it also drains a few sensorial memories and sensations. Perhaps this is the only way for the creature to feel again. It actually feeds on such senses, and can use them both to replenish itself and to heal its wounds. For each sense drained, the tactyle can heal 1d4hp. If it has not been injured, the Tactyle simply "digests" the feelings and senses it has drained. It must feed on at least one sense, once every seven days.

**Immunities (Ex):** Due to its lack of regular senses, the tactyle is utterly immune to illusions and spells that affect sight, hearing, taste or smell. It also has high resistance to acid and cold-based attacks, as detailed above. Tactyles fear electricity and lightning attacks, thought, for such attacks usually leave a trail of electrically charged particles in the air and tamper with the senses of the creature, confusing it. They try



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their best to stay clear of electrically charged areas or items.

**Skills:** The tactyle gains a +4 racial bonus to Climb, Hide and Move Silently. It never makes Listen and Spot checks, relying solely on its Improved Blindsight ability to detect creatures, objects and heat sources.

**Tough Skin (Ex):** The rugged, carpet-like skin of the tactyle is almost as hard as elephant skin, but quite flexible, constantly folding and refolding itself at the monster's will. It gives the tactyle's high natural armor class and makes it more difficult to pierce. Because of that, piercing attacks deal only half damage to the creature. At the same time, the creature's constant feeling of pain adds to the toughness of its skin, somehow numbing it from normally painful effects and effectively reducing bludgeoning damage. Half of the damage by bludgeoning attacks is considered subdual damage. Slashing attacks do normal damage, usually accompanied by a cloth-ripping sound.



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## YATEHCAA

### GODS ONCE WALKED THE WORLD, BUT ONE STAYED WITH US

By: Nathan Okerlund  
(Dmitri Stanislaus)

An American aboriginal  
domain, haunted with  
ghosts and a strange  
animal-god darklord

Listen, children. Listen, men and women. There was a time when gods walked the world, and talked with men as we do among ourselves. That time is gone. The gods are gone away; they hear us still, but they are not with us as they were before.

Only Coyote still walks with us, and this is why.

There was a time when the gods walked the world, and went up and down in it just as we do; and one morning First Man came and found Coyote, dressed in his cloak of stars, sitting in the sun.

"Ho, Coyote," First Man greeted him.

"Ho, First Man," Coyote replied.

"Coyote, I must speak to you."

"Speak, brother, for I will hear you."

"Coyote, you and I hunted for a long time together. We cast many demons out of the world and into the darkness between the stars. But your troublemaking has gone too far this time. Coyote, why did you betray us by giving the words we used to create the world to man?"

Coyote said nothing, but examined his forepaws earnestly.

"Coyote, why did you tear the bag of Wind and let storms and hail wrack the world?"

Coyote looked away and smiled.

"Coyote, why did you spill the bowl of Ocean and flood the world?"

At this, Coyote couldn't help himself. He broke down and sniggered. "Sorry," he said, still grinning.

But First Man grabbed him by the throat and stripped away his cloak of stars. "Sorry you will be, Coyote," he said sternly. "We've had enough of your bad behavior, and we are leaving you to face the consequences. I am taking from you your cloak of stars, and on behalf of all the gods I cast you out of the House of Gods, where you will not return until you have made amends."

Coyote lay silent and glanced at First Man from the corner of his eye. "And if I do not make amends?" he growled.

"Then you will get what you deserve," First Man replied. And that was that. Coyote begged, he pleaded, he reasoned, he cried, but First Man remained firm, and Coyote was left without his cloak of stars, without the door of the House of Gods open to him.

Coyote went away angry, as you can imagine, and he walked up and down, plotting and planning how he would enter the House of the Gods and steal back his prized possession. He walked to the north, to the south, to the east, to the west, he walked between the Four Sacred Mountains, plotting and planning; and after a little while a shadow fell across him.

At first Coyote thought it was the Sun leaving the sky to go to the House of Gods, but when he looked up he saw the Sun high in the sky looking down on him; but his light was weak, as if a shadow lay between them. "Brother Sun," Coyote called, "Tend your fire! You careless slubberdegullion, you'll leave me in the dark if you go on this way."

"My light grows no dimmer," the Sun replied. "But I see a shadow gathering about you, Coyote. You had better be careful."

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Coyote flourished his brush with panache and ignored him, but the shadow over him grew; and Coyote began to be frightened, because he did not have his cloak of stars, and because he had been cast out from the House of Gods, and because there were many creatures he had hunted with First Man and banished to the darkness between the stars who hated him and who would harm him if they could.

When the Moon came up, Coyote could hardly see her for the shadow around him. "Oh, Sister Moon," he called, frightened, "What has happened? Why is your light so dim?"

"My light has not dimmed at all, Coyote," the Moon replied. "But I see a great shadow upon you."

"Oh, oh!" Coyote howled, miserable with fright. "It is the Dark Walkers, who wander the abyss between the stars. They will seize me and take me with them! Oh, help me, Sister Moon, and drive away their shadow! I feel it cut through me like the winter wind."

But the Moon said nothing, and Coyote knew she would not help him, because it was her sons whom Coyote had drowned by spilling the bowl of Ocean and flooding the world.

"I will go to the House of the Gods, so the Dark Walkers will not find me," Coyote said to himself--but First Man had cast him out from the House of the Gods. And the shadow over him grew stronger.

"I will use my cloak of stars and give myself a new face, so the Dark Walkers will not know me," Coyote said to himself--but First Man had taken his cloak of stars. And the shadow over him grew stronger.

Coyote fled to the north, and the shadow followed him. He fled to the south, and the shadow followed him. He fled to the east, then to the west; but the shadow grew stronger, and stronger still. And at last Coyote, who was and is a coward at heart, fell to his belly and covered his eyes with his brush, and whined and wailed, "Don't hurt me, oh mighty Dark Walkers! See, I grovel, I abase myself, I writhe in the dirt like a worm. Do what you like with me, but don't hurt me!"

And all was silent; and when Coyote opened his eyes the shadow was gone, and the moon shone bright and clear all around.

"Ha, ha," Coyote barked to the moon. "I didn't need your help at all."

But the moon made no reply. And when the sun came up, he, too, refused to speak to Coyote. So did the wind, and the rain. And as Coyote went up and down the land of the People he saw that the Four Sacred Mountains had been moved from their places, and they, too, refused to speak to him. And First Man and First Woman were nowhere to be found. They had left the world, and Coyote was alone.

From that day to this Coyote has walked searching for First Man. That is why Coyote always comes near the campfire by night; he comes to see if First Man, who first tamed fire, is there. Coyote knows that First Man still has his cloak of stars, and he wants it back--because without the help of Sun and Moon, Rain and Wind, First Man and First Woman, and without his cloak of stars...

... Coyote can die.

**Cultural level:** Iron Age (CL 2).

## The Land

The terrain of Yatehcaa is dominated by mountains and high desert. The air is dry; most vegetation is adapted to a dry climate, with cactus and sagebrush common in the valleys and the peaks covered in pine forests. In places the terrain has been tortured into bizarre geological shapes such as arches and battlements of stone. The domain is a distorted quadrilateral in shape, about two hundred miles north to south and four hundred east to west, with four mountains known as the Four Sacred Mountains at the points of the quadrilateral. In the Prime Material Plane in which Coyote was worshipped these mountains lay at the four points of the compass, forming a near-perfect diamond, but the Dark Powers shifted their placement in when they formed the domain--presumably to disorient and

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vex Coyote. Sky Mountain, also referred to as Sun Mountain, lies in the southeast, Iron Mountain in the southwest, Rain Mountain in the northwest, and Silver Mountain in the northeast.

## The Folk

The human inhabitants of Yatehcaa have dark complexions and straight black hair; men and woman both wear their hair in long braids. They wear simple clothing of wool; everyday garments are left undyed, but fine clothing is dyed red, yellow, and green. The Yateh are expert in silverwork and make exquisite ornaments of silver and turquoise and many, especially among the women, wear many ornaments of silver. The number of ornaments a woman wears is usually (but not always) a sign of her social status. The Yateh are expert weavers and potters and make a few implements of iron, but they have not learned to fashion implements of steel.

The male Yateh are, for the most part, shepherders and farmers, and maize and beans, occasionally supplemented by mutton, form the basis of the diet of the Yateh. A very few are ironsmiths and silversmiths; the secrets of metalworking are usually handed down from father to son and are kept within the family. Nearly all weavers and potters are women.

## The Law

Traditional Matriarchy/Theocracy. Yatehcaa has no central government at all; society is governed partly by religious traditions and ceremonies carried out by the priests (all of whom are male) and by a matriarchal familial order, in which the oldest woman of an extended family supervises and advises her descendants. Warfare within the domain is unknown; the domain doesn't have the population necessary for large-scale conflict. However, blood feuds between extended families are fairly common. The Yateh, as a people, are extremely conservative and traditional in outlook; respect for one's elders and loyalty to one's family are the virtues they most value.

## Religion

Most Yateh clerics are in fact druids, who respect and worship each god of the Yateh pantheon in different ceremonies. Religious ceremonies are also social and family occasions for the Yateh; some are performed at certain times of the year and others are performed at the request of a person who has some matter he wishes to bring before the gods. These ceremonies involved days--usually one, three, or seven--of the cleric singing of the history of the Yateh and creating elaborate sand painting depicting the events he describes for three or four hours a night. Two of the most common ceremonies are the Enemyway (performed when someone feels that he has become the object of malevolent supernatural attention, as of a chindi or a witch), and the Blessing Way (performed when the petitioner has some unusually weighty request to make of the gods).

According to the myths of the Yateh, all wizardly magic is based on the words which the first gods used to create the world; Coyote learned the secret words by eavesdropping on the councils of the gods and taught them to certain of his followers, who became the first wizards.

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However, when the gods learned what Coyote had done, they decided that they would restore the balance by giving certain men the ability to use those same words of power themselves, and these men became the first sorcerers. Hence, in Yateh society sorcerers are almost like paladins; they are thought to be imbued with a certain amount of divine power and are considered to be heroes sent to battle the forces of evil. Similarly, bards are considered to be a form of cleric, sharing the ancient stories and songs which first shaped the world and which teach the Yateh of their past. The Yateh believe that it was because men accepted Coyote's teaching that they were banished with Coyote from the presence of the other gods. Wizards are referred to as "the children of Coyote" and are universally shunned and abominated by the honest and pious among the Yateh; the penalty for practicing wizardry is death.

The attitude of the Yateh toward Coyote is highly ambivalent. He is recognized as a divine figure, but his storied lack of foresight and penchant for getting himself into trouble make him an object of ridicule, as well. He is feared and hated for his bizarre, random acts of malice, but revered as a protector from the demons and monsters he hunted in the company of First Man.

## Superstitions

The Yateh will not speak the name of a person who has died, for fear of calling the person's chindi down on them. The chindi is a ghost-like creature which represents all the evil of the dead person, and if it hears its name spoken it may choose to visit the speaker, causing him or her to fall ill. Chindi usually appear as animals, but may also appear as spots of fire, dust devils, or as the person they were in life.

The Yateh also refuse call Coyote by name; it is whispered that he can hear his name wherever it is spoken and may decide to visit the speaker. Instead, they refer to him as the Trickster or He Who Laughs. Any occurrence of

unusually bad luck is referred to as "a visit from the Trickster."

## Natives PCs

Player characters from Yatehcaa will mainly be barbarians, bards, rangers, druids, clerics, or sorcerers. Rogues, paladins, and monks are extremely rare, and fighters are unheard of. Taking a level in any wizard class is an Act of Ultimate Darkness for any native PC of Yatehcaa. (This applies only to the first level taken. Any subsequent levels are gained without further penalty.)

Coyote is out there--and  
Coyote is always hungry.  
--Yateh proverb

## Coyote

### Darklord of Yatehcaa

**Demigod, CR 15, Small Outsider.** HD 20d4+20; HP 70; Init +9; Spd 45 ft; AC 20 (+5 Dex, +1 size, +4 natural) Atk 1 bite +5 melee 1d4. Face/Reach 5' X 5', SA spell-like abilities, SQ Thief abilities, DR 20/+2, fast healing 5, SR 15 AL CE, SV Fort +11 Reflex +15 Will +8; Str 7 Dex 20 Con 13 Int 20 Wis 7 Cha 20

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +20, Concentration +15, Hide +20, Listen +20, Move Silently +20, Spot +20 Search +15, Sense Motive +10, Spellcraft +20; Improved Initiative

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## *Spell-like abilities:*

*At will*--blink, charm monster, dancing lights, darkness, detect magic, enlarge, ghost sound, improved invisibility, persistent image, hallucinatory terrain, reduce, sleep, suggestion, telekinesis, ventriloquism.

*3/day*: Animate object, confusion, dispel magic, dream, polymorph any object, permanent image, programmed image, project image, vanish

*1/day*: Antipathy/sympathy, control weather, mass charm, maze, power word: blind, teleport without error

All spells cast as a 15th level sorcerer, save DC: (15 + spell level)

**Special Abilities:** Coyote has the special defensive abilities (Defensive Roll, Improved Evasion, Slippery Mind, Uncanny Dodge) of a 20th level thief.

## Current sketch

Coyote always appears as a largish, red-brown coyote, perhaps two and a half feet at the shoulder; there is no easy way to distinguish him from an ordinary coyote, which abound throughout the domain. Coyote can communicate telepathically with any intelligent being within 100 feet of him, but he prefers to talk out loud in most circumstances. He can speak any language which he hears spoken; his favored conversational gambit is to use ventriloquism to make it seem that his voice appears from any number of odd places over the course of a conversation.

Coyote is a perpetual practical joker; sometimes his jests are merely bizarre or distracting, but often they are extremely destructive and they are nearly always horrifyingly malicious. He delights in using illusions and enchantment to sow distrust and hatred among the Yateh, and several long-running blood feuds have their origins in some occasion in which Coyote convinced both families that the other had harmed them. He has been known to charm children away from the hogans of the Yateh and leave their half-eaten bodies in the desert to be found by their grieving

parents, and to use his powers to drive lone shepherds or farmers mad. Indeed, among the Yateh they say of the insane, "He's talking to the Trickster."

Coyote is considered the god of trickery and deception; he is also the patron of wizards and rogues and he can use a wide variety of enchantment and illusion magic at will. His extremely high Intelligence means that he will use his spells to excellent effect, but his (relatively) extremely low Wisdom sometimes leads to bizarre and comical mishaps. Coyote has been known to create an illusion, become distracted, and later react to his own illusion as if it were real; indeed, many of his practical jokes end up affecting him as much as or more than anyone else.

Coyote may be found anywhere throughout the domain, but he is most often found in the arroyos and box canyons near the foot of Silver Mountain in the northwest corner of the domain. Coyote can hear his name spoken anywhere in the domain and may elect to pay a visit to whomever uses it--usually much to that person's regret.

Coyote is fond of storytelling and will often become invisible, take a place near a campfire, and demand that those present share a story with him, then share a story of his own. If he enjoys the story told and his own story is met with applause, he will disappear into the night, perhaps leaving behind some token of appreciation like a lump of silver or a dead rattlesnake. If he dislikes the story or feels his own story is unappreciated, he may make the group the object of his unwanted attentions.

Coyote is cursed by the loss of his cloak of stars, by the absence of the other gods, and by his fear of death. He believes that the Dark Walkers (as he refers to the Dark Powers) intend to torment him for a time, then abandon him to the monsters he fought with First Man--and without the godly powers First Man stripped from him, they will be able to destroy him.

## Combat



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Coyote does not "combat opponents" so much as "toy with victims"; he lost most of his supernatural abilities when he was forced into Ravenloft, but enough remain to make him extremely dangerous. Coyote never uses spells which directly damage his opponents, preferring to use spells of illusion, enchantment, and transmutation to disorient and humiliate the targets of his warped sense of humor. Of course, many of his practical jokes have a potentially deadly punch line.

Coyote is a coward, and will always flee from battle if his opponent shows any signs of actually being able to harm him. His use of improved invisibility and illusion make this somewhat unlikely, but without his cloak of stars Coyote takes no chances.

Fortunately for his victims, Coyote usually has a short attention span, and he rarely intentionally kills the objects of his jokes, as it cuts short the amusement.

## Closing the Borders

When Coyote wills it, the border of Yatehcaah disappears in a mirage of an endless desert; anyone attempting to cross the desert will begin to suffer bizarre and horrifying hallucinations. For every round a person suffers these hallucinations, he must make a Will save at DC (5 + the number of rounds in which the person has suffered hallucinations) or suffer the effects of a failed madness check. If a person fails three such madness checks he can no longer function normally (effectively becoming an NPC) and will soon die of thirst unless some other person assists him.

## Encounters

**The Children of Coyote:** As legend has it, Coyote taught certain men to use the words of power with which the world was made and to take the form of animals in order to get power over their fellow-man. These men and their descendants have handed down that knowledge from generation to generation and share it only with those who take oaths of darkness to join the fellowship of the Children of Coyote, more commonly called witches or skinwalkers. They venerate Coyote particularly among the gods, and it is said he sometimes comes when they call him. However, Coyote is not a particularly helpful master; he is just as quick to play his killing jokes on his "children" as on anyone else.

Skinwalkers are found throughout Yateh society, but are more common in certain families and certain places in the domain. In particular, the northwest of the domain, near the foot of Silver Mountain, is dominated by families of witches.

To become a skinwalker a person must be instructed by a witch in the appropriate rites and oaths, a process which takes at least one month; he must then prepare the skin of a coyote according to a dark ritual performed at the new moon, which allows him to take animal form and gain the other bonuses of the template. If the skin is lost or destroyed the skinwalker loses all bonuses of the template until he can prepare another skin, a process, which will require at least one month.

Note that a skinwalker is NOT a lycanthrope; he cannot transmit lycanthropy and is not subject in any way to the phases of the moon.

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## Skinwalker (template):

This template can be added to any humanoid creature.

**Hit Dice:** Same as the character + 2.

**Speed:** +10 feet in humanoid form, 40 feet in animal form

**Attacks:** Same as the character or 1 (bite) at character's Base Attack Bonus + Str. bonus

**Damage:** Same as the character or 1d6 + Str. Bonus

**Animal Empathy:** Skinwalkers can communicate and empathize with coyotes and wolves, giving them a +4 racial bonus to checks when influencing the animal's attitude and allowing the communication of simple concepts.

**Special Qualities:** The skinwalker retains all special qualities of the character and those listed below:

**Alternate Form:** The skinwalker can shift into animal form as though using the polymorph self spell as a standard action. Upon assuming either form, the skinwalker regains hit points as if having rested for a day. If slain in animal form, the skinwalker reverts to humanoid form.

**Damage Reduction:** Skinwalkers are unnaturally tough and gain DR 5.

**Saves:** The skinwalker has the character's base saves, with a +2 racial bonus to Fortitude and Will saves.

**Abilities:** The skinwalker gets a +4 bonus to Con and Dex scores.

**Skills:** Same as the character. The skinwalker gets a +4 racial bonus to Search, Spot, and Listen checks in humanoid form. In animal form this bonus increases to +8.

**Feats:** Same as the character. When in animal form the skinwalker gets the Blind-fight, Improved Initiative, and Track feats.

**Climate/Terrain:** Same as the character or coyote (mountain, desert).

**Organization:** Solitary, pair, or family.

Challenge rating: Same as the character +2.

**Treasure:** Standard

**Alignment:** Any evil.

**Advancement:** By character class

## Corpse powder

A Yateh wizard with at least 8 ranks in Knowledge: Arcana (or Knowledge (Yatehcaa)) can create corpse powder from the skin of the palms of the hands and soles of the feet of a corpse. A person struck by a sling-stone coated in corpse powder is afflicted by a wasting disease equivalent to mummy rot unless he makes a Fortitude save (DC 15); like mummy rot, it is a magical disease and can only be healed by divine magic. Creation of the powder requires one week; the skin of a single hand or foot makes powder sufficient for two sling-stones. If the person from whom the corpse powder is made was a relative of the person struck by the stone, the save DC to resist the disease is 20.

## Chindi:

A chindi is a malevolent spirit formed at the death of a Yateh tribesman; only the very young and the elderly do not leave chindi behind. For example, if a Yateh dies indoors (in Yatehcaa, in a hogan) his chindi will haunt the structure forever afterward; the hogan must be abandoned and nothing inside it at the time of death may be taken from it, or the chindi will follow the taker. Treat chindi as having the Ghost template, with the following modifications: They may also manifest as animals, as dust devils, or as a ball of light (equal to the spell dancing lights). As one of their 1d3 special attacks they always have the Cause Disease ability.

**Cause Disease (Su):** A chindi can cause disease with a touch. If a chindi touches a person (making a successful touch attack), the person attacked must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + ½ the chindi's Hit Dice + the chindi's Cha modifier) or fall ill with a wasting disease which causes him to lose 1d4 points of Constitution per week. This Constitution loss is permanent. It can ONLY be cured by the appropriate Yateh religious ceremony (usually an Enemyway

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ceremony) or by appropriate divine magic of at least 7th level. At the DM's option, the result of this disease may instead be equivalent to a failed Madness check. If the object of the attack makes his saving throw he is immune to the chindi's Cause Disease ability for one day.



The Undead Sea Scrolls

Things that bump in  
the night...

Scientiae Arcanum

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## ADOHI

### A DEADLY UNNATURAL INFESTATION

By: Joel Paquin  
(Gotten Grabmal)

"I shall smile when wreaths of snow  
Blossom where the rose should grow;  
I shall sing when night's decay  
Ushers in a drearier day."

Emily Bronte (1818-1848), "Fall, leaves, fall"

	Elder (Adohi)	Young (Ayuli)	Warrior (Ayawisgi)
<b>Huge Plant</b>			
<b>Hit Dice:</b>	8d8+30 (66 hp)*	4d8+20 (38 hp)	6d8+25 (52 hp)
<b>Initiative:</b>	-3 (Dex)	-3 (Dex)	-3 (Dex)
<b>Speed:</b>	30ft.	30ft.	30ft.
<b>AC:</b>	18 (-2 size, -3 Dex, +13 natural)	same	same
<b>Attacks:</b>	2 slams +14 melee	2 slams +8 melee	2 slams +12 melee
<b>Damage:</b>	Slam 2d6+8	Slam 2d6+6	Slam 2d6+8
<b>Face/Reach:</b>	10 ft. by 10 ft. / 12 ft.	10 ft. by 10 ft. / 12 ft.	10 ft. by 10 ft. / 12 ft.
<b>Special Attacks:</b>	Animate trees (Sp), Thorn Spray (Ex)	none	Animate trees (SP)
<b>Special Qualities:</b> (all adohis)	Plant. Fire resistance, Lightning vulnerability, Less damage from blunt weapon		
<b>Saves:</b>	Fort +10, Ref +1, Will +5	Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +2	Fort +9, Ref +1, Will +4
<b>Abilities:</b>	Str 26, Dex 5, Con 20 Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8	Str 22, Dex 5, Con 20 Int -, Wis -, Cha 8	Str 26, Dex 5, Con 20, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8
<b>Skills:</b>	Hide +12, Listen +9, Sense motive +9	none	Hide +10, Listen +7
<b>Feats(all adohis):</b>	Improved Bull Rush, Iron Will, Power Attack		
<b>Climate/Terrain:</b>	Cold forests	same	same
<b>Organization:</b>	Solitary or Colony (See below)	same	same
<b>Challenge Rating:</b>	10	3	8
<b>Treasure:</b>	Standard	None	None
<b>Alignment:</b>	Always neutral evil	Always neutral evil	Always neutral evil
<b>Advancement:</b>	See text*	None	None

\* Elder starts at 8hd but can go up to 15hd

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The Adohi is a result from Ravenloft's twisted nature: a tree feeding on corpses and creating minions to bring its needed nutrients.

## Excerpts from the Forlorn druids chronicles:

*In February of the year 615 (Barovia calendar), our Grand Druid of that time received an unusual request. It was a call from friends of the Circle for help: a request to travel in the Balinok mountains, in the land of the devil Strahd, in order to investigate about a dangerous type of animated tree. The message mentioned the creature was of a new type, probably unseen before. At first, the druids dismissed that request for another "evil treant report" and went in Barovia thinking the evil tree would be quickly overwhelmed by their group's powerful druidic power. They knew that fighting evil treants wasn't like chasing wolf, but still they thought it would be a short trip.*

*The seven druids that went to Barovia were fairly high level, with experience, and they had fought dread treants before... Only three would come back to Forlorn. May Belenus did welcome the soul of the fallen. Our land is creating evil creatures and sometimes very powerful ones. This chronicle is for informing younger members of our Circle, in order to prevent avoidable death and suffering.*

*It should be recorded in these chronicles that they encountered a different creature, very uncommon, and a lot more powerful than a treant. The druids returned with a report about an evil tree that was sending minions a long distance from it, to hunt for its food: human corpses. That was the first known sighting of that awful creature, that we named Adohi.*

*A mistake the group did should be well known and discussed in group or during councils, so that no druid will ever fall again while fighting these unnatural horrors of the*

*lands. The group encountered a walking tree in the woods, carrying a dead human body in its branches. They thought this was the reported evil tree and managed to destroy the foul creature without real trouble. As they would realize afterward, unknown to them, a dark creature filled with malignity and cruelty over mankind, used that battle to gather information on the druids.*

*The monstrous creature did get its revenge. The last night the group had to spend in Barovia was disturbed by a sudden attack of evil trees. The group witnessed savagery and impressive blunt force. According to the survivors, there were possibly up to 14 animated trees! Some of the druids that died fell during that battle. The rest of the group retreated in avian form, to regroup out of the tree's range.*

*Investigation later outlined an area where many animated trees were found. After careful preparation, the group of druids launched an attack on the dread trees, quickly killing them with the deadliest possible spells against plants. However, during the battle, more druids fell, as the leading tree was a creature using druidic spells!*

*What follows is a detailed report on the creatures.*

## Introduction

The dreaded Adohi is the cause of many worries in human communities because it sends forth its minions to attack their settlements. It is rumored that these foul abominations are animated by the spirits of people killed violently and abandoned under the covers of trees. In fact, they are created when humanoids die violent deaths and are left to rot under the cover of evergreens. Adohis are rare because the large number of carrion eaters found in Ravenloft forests don't usually let bodies go undisturbed under tree branches long enough for them to decay sufficiently.



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When it does happen, Ravenloft's dark essence twists the neutral nature of the forest. It animates the coniferous tree that fed upon the nutrients from the decaying corpse into a treant-like creature, but one with dark motives and a morbid taste for human flesh.

The Adohi must absorb nutrients from sentient (demi)humans (though humans are preferred, elves, dwarves and halflings are also satisfying to the creature) at least once a month. It does so by uprooting itself, pulling a corpse in the hole created by this uprooting and retaking its place. If the people are not dead, the Adohi will trample them before dragging the victims into place. The roots will then quickly decompose the corpse and feed on it. This process takes 12 hours during which the creature is immobile. If the Adohi does not feed monthly, it loses one hit dice per month it goes without feeding and could eventually die from starvation.

Possibly the worst thing about these hideous beings is their ability to animate other trees and thus to reproduce. They can then use these animated trees to help them capture their victims.

## Appearance

Adohis (elder) and their minions are all created from evergreens. Adohis aren't the largest or oldest trees in the forest, which makes them very difficult to identify if they choose to remain immobile and hidden. A druid or ranger has to make a Wilderness Lore check at -10 for identifying immobile creatures for the monsters they are (plus circumstance modifier, at DM's choice).

When an Adohi is animated, some of its branches, knots and bark twist to form a face bearing two haunting eyes and a small mouth-like opening. Also, the tree bark depicts twisted images of the faces of all the people it has fed upon. These faces are slowly animated and silently seem to shout horrified screams. That

sight is cause enough for a horror check (DC 12) with a -4 penalty if the onlooker personally knew one of the people whose face is now on the tree.

In winter conditions, Adohis also have the ability to cover their branches with snow, so the creatures can easily blend within the other snow-covered evergreens after they have moved:

**Snow Cover (Su)** This ability takes 4-9 (3 + 1d6) minutes to complete and completely erases all traces on the ground in a 100' radius (125' at 10-11 hit dice, 175' at 12-14 hit dice and 250' at 15 hit dice). Anyone watching the process would see a sector of the forest where the snow on the ground eerily moves weightlessly toward the sky before falling back on the trees and the ground. Adohis can use that ability up to three times a day.

## Creation of minions

As other treant-like creatures, the dreaded Adohi (elder) can animate trees to help in all aspects of life, including battle. These young (called Ayulis) can be animated after one round of concentration, and a single Adohi can animate up to four Ayulis per day.

Ayulis appear as animated uprooted conifers, without eyes or mouth. They cannot go more than 200 feet away from the Adohi that controls them. When they stray outside that range of control they revert to their normal state. Ayulis remain animated for one turn per Adohi's hit dice.

An Adohi can choose to start a colony and thus create a stronger breed of Ayulis. The chosen Ayuli has to be allowed to slowly feed on a humanoid corpse for one year. The Adohi can undertake only three Ayuli feeding at any given time.

This process has two effects: the first is that the first-ever feeding forever restricts the Adohi to a circular area (a circle in the forest, of

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about 500 feet radius centered on this first Ayuli creation. The second effect is that this area becomes desecrated and radiates such an evil aura that most animals avoid it. Otherwise, that part of the forest looks natural to the average traveler. Henceforth, this circular area will be the Adohi's "breeding ground" for his Ayulis.

At the end of the year of such slow feeding and power building, the Ayuli is fully transformed into a warrior tree and is now called an Ayawisgi. Ayawisgis are different from Ayulis in that they are more powerful and harder to destroy. Also, Ayawisgis' movements aren't limited to remaining within a confined distance of their creator. Thus, Ayawisgis can travel great distances, but cannot cross any domain borders.

Ayawisgis aren't animated automatons like their Ayuli cousins. They are sentient creatures, able to think and execute complex orders and tasks given to them by the elder Adohi. However, if the Adohi chooses to, they can be completely under his control, and the Adohi can see and hear everything his minions can.

An Adohi gains one hit dice for every Ayuli turned into an Ayawisgi (up to a maximum of 15 hit dice, even if more Ayawisgis are created after they reach this maximum hit dice).

The main objective of any Adohi is to create the largest possible number of Ayawisgis and send them through the domain in search of as many victims as possible. When any Ayawisgi finds a victim, it brings back the corpse to the Adohi. With those corpses, the Adohi may choose to feed or create more Ayawisgis out of animated Ayulis.

However, this unnatural growing infestation can be powerful and overwhelming and can quickly decimate isolated settlements. So, Darklords have been known to intervene directly to destroy Adohi colonies.

An area inhabited by an older Adohi can be very dangerous if it has spawned a large number of Ayawisgis, some used as guards

(number usually encountered:  $d4+1$ ), the others scout the domain and bring back corpses. In theory, the number of Ayawisgis that an Adohi can create is unlimited, but Adohi can create only one Ayawisgi at a given time.

Usually, an Adohi maximizes its chances of surviving by spreading its Ayawisgis over a large territory. This means that wandering Ayawisgis are usually encountered alone. Also, an Ayawisgi that knows it is being followed never goes back to its master.

A 13 hit dice Adohi becomes an Advnelisgi and is able to cast spells as a first level Druid (2nd level at 14 hit dice and 3rd level at 15 hit dice. After that 3rd level gained, the progression is then slower, gaining one Druid level for every ten Ayawisgis it creates). All these magical powers are used to enhance the Adohi's survival chances and for the protection of the colony.

Should an Adohi be forced to move out of its desecrated forest area, it loses control of all created Ayawisgis. These then wander aimlessly until destroyed or have starved to death.

Ayawisgis can animate up to two Ayuli per day, but cannot create other Ayawisgis. Otherwise, they have all the powers and weaknesses of an Adohi, except for the thorn spray and Druidic powers. An Ayawisgi should also feed on dead flesh once a month, but animal flesh (at least as big as a mid-sized dog) can sustain it.

Also, if an Adohi is killed, all Ayawisgis under its control suddenly stop their current tasks and move at maximum speed toward the desecrated forest area that was home to their Adohi and the site of their birth. Adventurers who have killed an Adohi can have a deadly surprise when all of the dead Adohi's Ayawisgis converge on the area. Once arrived, the Ayawisgis will remorselessly kill all living things in the area, including normal ordinary trees. After a while, the desecrated forest area is rendered utterly lifeless by the maddened

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Ayawisgis and that deforested circle will grow until they are stopped (at a destruction rate of about 30 feet by 30 feet per day per Ayawisgi).

## Combat

By themselves Adohis usually avoid attacking intruders preferring to send minions instead, while remaining immobile and hidden. Alternatively, they might use Druidic spells from a distance.

If attacked directly it will attack with fury and brutality, aiming to kill one enemy at a time by attacking physically (2 slam attacks) and launching a thorn spray:

**Thorn spray (Ex):** The hard conifer thorns are thrown in a 30' cone (10' diameter at the end of the range), inflicting only 1-2 hit points to the victim. However, the corrupting sap that the creature excretes causes paralysis. Fortitude saving throws (DC 12) are allowed to avoid being paralyzed for 1-4 rounds. The thorn spray attack is in addition to the slam attacks and can be done once every two rounds.

**Fire resistance (Ex):** Due to the fact that they are gorged with water and blood, Adohis and their minions do not fear fire as other treant-like creatures do. Fire does half damage to them with a saving throw allowed for no damage. However, for the same reason, lighting inflicts twice as much damage.

**Blunt weapon resistance:** Because of their supple coniferous nature, they take only one hit point damage (plus magical bonus of the weapon, if any) from blunt weapons or normal missiles.

## Habitat

Adohis are only encountered in the cold coniferous forests of some domains. Barovia, Vorostokov, Lamordia, and Falkovnia are the

most frequent domains where Adohis are reported to have been witnessed.

## Ecology

These creatures are abnormal accidents caused by Ravenloft's evil nature and have no role in the natural cycle.

Adohis and Ayawisgis rarely speak to other creatures, and when they choose to, it is in a crude form of the domain's native language.

They hate other animated plant life as well, be it normal treants or evil ones.

## Suggested Adventure Hooks

- ◆ There are reports of trees attacking people and making off with the bodies, or of trees walking while carrying corpses. Another possibility is an account of a tree periodically seen unearthing bodies in a cemetery and left carrying corpses. Players are asked to investigate.
- ◆ Lord Strahd (most probably via Lord Vasili) (or another Darklord) is annoyed by numerous "trees carrying corpses" reports and hire adventurers to get information, or to get rid of a potential colony infestation.
- ◆ Druids seek out the players to help them look for and destroy an elder Adohi that is threatening a human settlement.

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## Inspiration

The names of the different forms of this monster are taken from the Cherokee language. (Should you want to learn more:: <http://public.csusm.edu/public/raven/cherokee.dir/cherlexi.html> )

"Adohi" (the elder's name) means "forest" in Cherokee. As for the animated trees, the name "Ayuli" means "young child", "Ayawisgi" means "warrior" and "Advnelisgi" (Adohis with Druidic powers) means "wizard".

I admire the wisdom of peaceful native Americans and I feel they have many things to teach us.

I got the inspiration for the Adohi creature when I was on a business trip north of Québec City in the middle of winter. The idea came while I was driving along a deserted road through a provincial park full of snowy evergreens...

## Bonus Appendix!!! Adohi stats-2<sup>nd</sup> Edition

	Elder (Adohi)	Young (Ayuli)	Warrior (Ayawisgi)
<b>Climate/Terrain</b>	Pine tree Forest		
<b>Frequency</b>	Very Rare	Very Rare	Rare
<b>Organization</b>	Grove	-	Solitary
<b>Activity Cycle</b>	Any	Any	Any
<b>Diet</b>	Carnivore	-	Carnivore
<b>Intelligence</b>	High (13-14)	-	High (13-14)
<b>Treasure</b>	Special	none	none
<b>Alignment</b>	Neutral Evil	Neutral Evil	Neutral Evil
<b>No. Appearing</b>	1	1-4	1
<b>Armor Class</b>	2	4	3
<b>Movement</b>	12	12	12
<b>Hit Dice</b>	10-17	6	8
<b>THAC0</b>	11+	15	13
<b>No. Attacks</b>	2	2	2
<b>Damage/Attack</b>	2d6+4	2d6	2d6+4
<b>Special Attacks</b>	Thorn Spray	none	none
<b>Special Defenses</b>	Camouflage	none	none
<b>Magic Resistance</b>	Nil	Nil	Nil
<b>Size</b>	H (13'-18' tall)	L (7'-12') or H (13'-18')	H (13'-18')
<b>Morale</b>	Champion (15-16)	-	Champion (15-16)
<b>XP Value</b>	7,000 (as 10 hd)	420	1,400



# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## BREEDS OF THE ASWANG

### FIRE AND BLOOD BEYOND THE EDGE OF NIGHT

By: Dion Fernandez  
(of Midway Haven)

The Allawig and the  
Padara--two new horrors  
spawned out of  
Ravenloft's conquered  
colonies, hidden deep  
within the swirling  
Mists.

*The moon was full when we in the Vestibulo heard the horrifying wail coming from outside. It terrified as so, not even the hallowed walls of our sanctuary could protect us from the fear it generated. A few moments of silence were broken when all of a sudden Portacio the groundskeeper barged into the temple doors, mortified beyond belief.*

*"Burning men," was all he could tell us, "burning men!"*

*From outside, I saw the objects of his terror: three walking corpses engulfed in flames, coming towards us but unable to set foot on sacred ground. They moved as quickly as living, breathing men, but their smoldering eyes and horrid, malicious grins betrayed their true motives. The holy sisters beside me clutched their beads and held each other tight, their eyes transfixed in fear on such an unholy mockery of what we hold dear.*

*Though fear, too, chilled my inner will, I knew I had a duty to do, to Matherion, to Her Church, and to these simple folk, helpless against these unnatural travesties. Quickly I clutched the Sacred Sigil from the altar and ran towards the doors. What happened next, I barely remember. Images of the Sigil being brandished*

*in the night, of screaming and corpses disintegrating into dust. How I managed to destroy these abominations of death that night, one against three, I would probably never know. Matherion, praise be to Her, had given me a new resolve, a new lease on life, to challenge and destroy these unholy creatures.*

**--Patos Leandro Alcantara  
La Vestibulo, Igid Rabi-i**

The aswang was given introductory treatment in the Kargatane's *Book of Sacrifices* as a new form of undead. This article hopes to elaborate more on the aswang's nature, and also provides modifications to the aswang template given in the first article. Those wishing to use the following aswang subspecies templates must first refer to "The Aswang" in the *Book of Sacrifices* for information regarding the creature's nature and lore. A non-template aswang subspecies, the Chanak, can be found in the first Undead Sea Scrolls netbook.

### Aswang, Allawig

This aswang breed manifests its ghoulish form as a corpse constantly surrounded by red fire. Night travelers are most easily duped by the allawig, led into the creature's lair where they eventually suffer being drained of life-essences and possibly returning as awang themselves.

Not only is the allawig a bane to the living but it also poses a threat to property, as it can easily set things burning. The allawig functions similarly as the basic aswang, but with a few modifications.

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## Creating an Allawig

"Allawig" is an aswang template that can be added to any humanoid creature (referred hereafter as the "base creature"). The creature's type changes to "undead."

**Hit Dice:** Increased to d12.

**Speed:** Same as the base creature, but also gains a climb ability of 30 ft.

**Armor Class:** the base creature's natural armor increases by +4, but allawig characters also gain a deflection bonus of +1 due to their fiery aura.

**Attacks:** The allawig retains all attacks of the base creature, and also gains a tongue attack.

**Damage:** The allawig's tongue attack deals 2d4 damage, but also deals an additional 1d4 fire damage.

**Special Attacks:** Same with the aswang, but unlike their other counterparts allawig do not have a Twilight Scream. They, however, have abilities unique to their kind.

*Create Spawn (Su):* Same as the base aswang, but 25% of all the allawig's victims become allawig themselves.

*Fire Touch (Su):* Any person touched by an allawig in its ghoulish form takes 1d4 fire damage per round (no save). If the allawig touches a combustible non-sentient, non-magical object smaller than itself it instantly bursts into flames. This supernatural touch also slightly affects non-magical metallic objects with a low melting point, such as gold, silver, bronze or copper.

*Bedazzled Lure (Su):* The allawig can use its fiery aura to produce a hypnotic pattern that can affect a maximum of three people at a time (as per a mass charm spell cast by a 16th-level sorcerer, no save) and lure them into its lair where it can feed on them. To prevent the lure the targets must wear their clothes inside out (see "Repelling an Allawig"). The allawig can use this ability while in its alternate form.

*Pact of Transference (Su):* The allawig is able to pass on a fragment of its essence through touch to a living humanoid, willing or otherwise. The victim then becomes an allawig himself. The original creature can use this ability two times in its undead existence before its body disintegrates into ashes. The victim must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or be permanently drained of all Constitution and transformed into an allawig in a single round.

**Special Qualities:** Same with the aswang. Allawig, however, have a few abilities unique to their kind.

*Aura of Fear (Su):* The mere sighting of an allawig causes all creatures within a 50-foot radius to succeed at a Will save (DC 10) or flee in fear, as the spell of the same name.

*Turn Resistance (Su):* An allawig has +2 turn resistance.

*Alternate Form (Su):* An allawig cannot assume the form of a huge white dog, but can assume the form of a fiery red-feathered owl with glowing blue eyes.

*Fire Subtype (Ex):* An allawig is immune to fire and fire-based attacks, but takes double damage from cold except on a successful save.

**Abilities:** Adjust from the base creature as follows: Str +2, Dex +4, Int -1, Wis +2, Cha -3. As undead creatures, aswang have no Constitution score.

**Feats:** An allawig gains Alertness, Lightning Reflexes and Multiattack, assuming the base creature meets the prerequisites and doesn't already have these feats.

**Saves:** Same as the base creature.

**Skills:** Allawig receive a +4 racial bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Open Lock and Search checks. Otherwise, same as the base creature.

**Climate/Terrain:** Any land and underground

**Organization:** Solitary

**Challenge Rating:** As the base creature +1

**Treasure:** Double standard



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**Alignment:** Always neutral evil

**Advancement:** By character class

## Allawig Weaknesses

### Identifying an Allawig

To identify an allawig in daylight, one must look at the allawig's reflection through a mirror or an adequately reflective surface. If the reflection shows a decaying corpse surrounded by heat mirages, then that person is an allawig.

### Repelling an Allawig

Allawig recoil from strongly presented holy symbols, and also recoil from mirrors or other metals that adequately reflect light. Native folk also advise night travelers to wear their clothes inside out. For some unknown reason the allawig's Bedazzled Lure does not affect people who do so.

### Slaying an Allawig

The most effective way of slaying an allawig is to stake its torso with a large shaft of freshly-cut bamboo or pine, seal the body in a coffin inlaid with mirrors, then shove the coffin into the ocean.

*I have never seen so much blood.*

*The previous night, the unearthly wail kept us all sheltered in our homes. I guess it was wise that the black-haired visitors told us to stay indoors, as they hunted the abomination through the winding city streets. Within moments of the scream, we can hear the slayers shout to each other as they chased whatever it was they--we--all wanted dead. Most of us lay uneasy in our beds that night, never knowing the fate of the creature or its hunters.*

*I would only find out in the morning, as I opened my window to see blood everywhere on the street, leaving a gory trail to the main square. I followed the blood trail with great reluctance, and I could feel my innards overturn*

*at the sight and stench that bathed the city this cold morning.*

*When I reached the square, I know I could never contain my impulses. I retched right there and then, upset by the scene in front of me. A man, bathed in a pool of blood, lay dead on the pavement, a large stake of bamboo plunged into his heart. The black-haired hunters had done well, indeed. The creature had been justly slain.*

*The blood, however... I have never seen so much blood.*

**--Justin Kierkerlund, Mayor of Kantora, Nova Vaasa.**



*(drawing by Dion Fernandez)*

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## Aswang, Padara

The hideous padara is an aswang that manifests its ghoulish form as a corpse with blood flowing from almost every part of its body. Its wild, unruly hair is constantly matted and caked in dried blood, and it always leaves traces of blood wherever it walks.

### Creating a Padara

"Padara" is an aswang template that can be added to any humanoid creature (referred hereafter as the "base creature"). The creature's type changes to "undead."

**Hit Dice:** Increased to d12.

**Speed:** Same as the base creature, but also gains a climb ability of 30 ft.

**Armor Class:** The base creature's natural armor increases by +4.

**Attacks:** The padara retains all attacks of the base aswang, and also gains a tongue attack. The padara also gains a ranged spit attack that deals 2d4 acid damage (no splash damage).

**Damage:** The padara's tongue attack deals 2d4 damage, but also deals an additional 1d4 acid damage.

**Special Attacks:** Same with the aswang. Padara, however, have additional abilities unique to their kind.

*Create Spawn (Su):* Same as the base aswang, but 25% of all the padara's victims become padara themselves. Additionally, 5% of all female victims of the padara become manananggal (see "Aswang, Manananggal" in the *Book of Sacrifices*).

*Contamination (Su):* Padara can use their dripping blood to turn foodstuffs and liquids into poison. To do this the padara must be in contact with an amount of food usually seen at a banquet table, or at least a bottleful of potable liquid. When the contaminated food or drink is imbibed, the poison deals 1d4 points of temporary Constitution damage for three rounds unless the victim makes a Fortitude save (DC

18). This poison can affect a given creature only twice in a 24-hour period.

**Special Qualities:** Same with the aswang. Padara, however, have a few abilities unique to their kind.

*Aura of Fear (Su):* The mere sighting of a padara causes all creatures within a 60-foot radius to succeed at a Will save (DC 14) or flee in fear, as the spell of the same name.

*Turn Resistance (Su):* A padara has +2 turn resistance.

*Liquid Bones (Su):* Padara have the ability to turn their bones into liquid. In this state the padara are immune from any nonmagical bludgeoning weapons. Transforming to and from liquid state each is a full-round action.

**Abilities:** Adjust from the base creature as follows: Str +2, Dex +3, Int -1, Wis +4, Cha -5. As undead creatures, aswang have no Constitution score.

**Feats:** A padara gains Alertness, Lightning Reflexes and Multiattack, assuming the base creature meets the prerequisites and doesn't already have these feats.

**Saves:** Same as the base creature.

**Skills:** Padara receive a +4 racial bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Open Lock and Search checks. Otherwise, same as the base creature.

**Climate/Terrain:** Any land and underground

**Organization:** Solitary

**Challenge Rating:** As the base creature +1

**Treasure:** Standard

**Alignment:** Always neutral evil

**Advancement:** By character class

## Padara Weaknesses

### Identifying a Padara

Even in broad daylight and in disguise, padara cannot hide their bleeding. Their eyes are always bloodshot, and even the slightest touch or graze can puncture their skin and set the blood flowing. If the blood flows profusely from

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an area of skin that was merely touched, and the person does not feel pain, that person is a padara.

## Repelling a Padara

Padara recoil from strongly presented holy symbols, and for some mystical reason also recoil from the stringed vertebrae of snake skeletons.

## Slaying a Padara

The most effective way of destroying a padara is to stake its torso with a large shaft of freshly-cut bamboo or pine and by dousing the creature with at least three bucketfuls of sanctified saltwater. This dousing washes away the padara until it dissolves and evaporates.

## Track of the Aswang

**Application:** The aswang is known as a gossip and an eavesdropper, one who mingles with townsfolk in the daytime and seeks out prey in the night. This terror track is for a personality who disrespects the privacy of simple folk, or who for no good reason uses his or her curiosity in malicious ways, voyeurism as an example.

**Stage One:** The character's eyes turn into a salty blue, increasing his Charisma by 1. During the night however, his eyes glow eerily, so much so that anybody within 20 feet of the character must now make a Fear save (+3 bonus).

**Stage Two:** The character's senses become heightened, gaining the Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Open Lock, and Search skills (if the PC already has any of these skills, points are increased by +4). The character however becomes aversive to bamboo or evergreen trees: merely being within 10 feet of them causes him to be moody, nauseous and very temperamental.

**Stage Three:** The character's physical prowess improves, gaining two points each in Strength

and Dexterity. His skin and flesh, however, become stiff, cold and gain the texture of parchment: he cannot stay under direct sunlight for more than 10 rounds or suffer 1d4 fire damage each round under sunlight.

**Stage Four:** The character's tongue becomes long, hard and prehensile, and can now be used as a weapon in a ranged attack, dealing 2d4 damage to a target. This horrible change however lowers the character's Intelligence score by 1.

**Stage Five:** The character recovers faster than normal, healing 3 points of damage each round (as long as he has at least 1 hit point left. However, he can no longer pass through a clear line of salt or cinnamon; as much as a tablespoonful of either substance now deals 1d6 damage to him.

**Stage Six:** The character can now let loose a Twilight Scream once day and only after nightfall, starting from a low moan and rising to a shrieking crescendo; any living creature within 60 feet of him screaming must now make a Fear save. Holy symbols now physically repulse him.

**Stage Seven:** The character can now scale vertical surfaces, gaining a climb speed equal to his normal ground speed. From this point on he is can now be turned by good clerics and paladins.

**Stage Eight:** The character can now turn any corpse in its early stages of decomposition into a suspicious meatlike substance it considers edible, which works just like the polymorph any object spell cast by a 12th-level sorcerer. However, he finds every other food repulsive and can no longer eat any food except these polymorphed corpses.

**Stage Nine:** The character can now polymorph at will into a white dog or black owl, and now gains a ghoulish form. However, using these abilities under daylight can destroy him, which can make him crumble to dust in five rounds.

**Stage Ten:** The character gains the abilities to drain fluids from a living being and create more

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aswang spawn. From this point on, a stake made of pine or bamboo driven into his torso is now lethally dangerous, and seawater can destroy him in two rounds.



A Cozseca is an unusual  
 beast: when it eats the  
 brain of a sentient  
 humanoid, it gets part of  
 its power in a strange  
 multiple personality  
 twist. The beast is also  
 used to produce a strange  
 drug for depraved  
 individuals...

By: Nathan Okerlund  
 (Dmitri Stanislaus)

## COZSECA

**Large Beast:** CR 8; HD 8d8 + 32; hp 68; Init + 6; Spd 45 feet; AC 15 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +4 natural); Attack 1 slam (2d6+6 + stun) or 1 bite (2d6+6, crit 18-20); Face/Reach 5' x 10'/5'; SA mimic, absorb personality; AL N(E), SV Fort +10, Ref +8, Will +1 (or +3 + Wis modifier of absorbed personality); Str 22, Dex 14, Con 19, Int 6 (or of absorbed personality), Wis 6 (or of absorbed personality), Cha 6 (or of absorbed personality).

*Skills and Feats:* Listen +12, Spot +12, Search +12 (or of absorbed personality, +8 to Listen, Spot, and Search checks); Blind-fight, Improved Initiative, Track, plus feats of absorbed personality.

The cozsca (coy-ZHAY-ka) is a strange and extremely dangerous beast occasionally found in the high mountains of the Demiplane, especially in the wilds of Barovia and Falkovnia. It is also known to inhabit the Frozen Wastes, and some scholars actually believe it is native to Sanguinia.

The cozsca somewhat resembles a dark red-brown hyena the size of a small bear; like hyenas, they have longer forelimbs than hind legs, and the adult cozsca is usually about five feet at the shoulder and weighs three hundred pounds. The head is rather more like the head of a hound than of a hyena; the cozsca has erect triangular ears and black eyes that glow red in low light. They are quicker than bears and

## COZSECA

### A VICIOUS MIMIC OF THE MOUNTAIN WILDS

stronger than most other creatures; they also have a horrifyingly effective animal cunning that stands them in good stead when hunting humanoids, their preferred prey. These characteristics would make them dangerous predators even if they did not have other, more horrible ways of bringing their prey to them. The abilities which make the cozsca so dangerous are its ability to mimic noises and to absorb the memories and abilities of those sentient creatures it devours.

**Mimic (Ex):** The cozsca can mimic almost any sound it has heard in order to lure its prey into its jaws. It can imitate birdsong, wolf-howls, human speech, or even such things as a guitar or a bottle breaking. The cozsca can imitate natural sounds (animal noises, running water, the crackling of fire) with perfect accuracy; if it has any personalities "stored" (see the Absorb ability, below) it can speak in the voice of that person, using whatever languages the personality can speak. A successful Sense Motive check (DC 23) will hint that something is not right; if it succeeds by 5 or more the hearer knows that the cozsca is actually someone or something imitating the speaker. Unnatural sounds (music, the clash of sword on steel, or similar noises) requires a Sense Motive check at DC 17 to reveal that the sound is not what it seems to be.

**Absorb (Ex):** When the cozsca eats the brain of a humanoid or similar sentient creature it is able to absorb that person's memories, personality, and mental abilities and use them to its own ends. This absorbing takes 1d4+1 hours after the brain is devoured and lasts for 1d4+1 months. During that time the cozsca can use the problem-solving abilities, languages, voice, and even spells of the person it has devoured. It gains the mental abilities of the person (his Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores); it

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can speak any languages he or she could speak in the person's own voice; and if the person was an arcane spellcaster or psionist, it can use any spells the person had access to, as long as the spells or psionic abilities have only verbal and/or mental triggers to activation. (Note that the cozseca has no access to spellbooks, so it can only use wizard spells in this way once. Sorcerer and bard spells and psionic abilities are still renewed daily.)

If the cozseca has eaten more than one sentient creature's brain it can switch from personality to personality as a free action; the personalities can confer among themselves as to the best course of action, but they always work together to benefit the interests of the cozseca. The personalities of those devoured still perceive of themselves as individuals; they do not feel any horror at their condition, but actually desire that their former friends and loved ones be joined with them in the mind of the beast.

Hearing a cozseca speak in a human voice is basis for a Horror check (DC 12) the first time a person hears it. Similarly, if a person hears the beast use the voice of a friend or loved one for the first time, he must make a Horror check at DC 17.

If, by chance, a person is devoured by a cozseca, is resurrected, and later again meets the beast, he must make a Madness check (DC 17) if his former self speaks to him.

## Combat

In combat, the cozseca will use its special abilities to divide and disorient its opponents while it lurks in the darkness until it has located a lone human, then it charges. On its first attack it attempts to overbear its prey and bring it to the ground--a slam attack dealing 2d6+5 damage. If the attack is successful, the person attacked must make a Fort save at DC (5+damage dealt) or be stunned and be unable to take any action for 2-5 rounds. The cozseca will then attack with its vicious jaws, seizing its victim by the throat and breaking its neck, then immediately devouring the brain. Even with its natural intelligence the cozseca is generally clever enough avoid large groups, men in armor, and fire; if it has access to human intelligence, it will use it to best advantage.

The cozseca is extremely aggressive and prefers to hunt intelligent creatures; usually it hunts only by night, retreating into the deep forest by day. If necessary, it will live on deer, moose or other large animals. Nothing hunts the cozseca except for extremely enterprising and daring humans, who desire its brain, a key ingredient for one of the most perverted and addictive drugs known to the alchemists of the Core.

## The Cozseca drug

The cozseca is a horrifying creature, but the uses to which it has been put are, in a way, even worse. Some nameless alchemist of past generations discovered that a preparation could be made from the cozseca's brain which would allow a human ingesting the preparation and a certain amount of human flesh to absorb a new personality as the cozseca itself does. Certainly in the most decadent and depraved circles of Dementlieu and Borca, it is whispered that a funeral of a person in high society is followed by a "memory party", in which those present celebrate the passing of a friend (or enemy) by taking his personality into themselves for the space of an evening, and learning first-hand of



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all the scandals, amours or vendettas that person was involved in life. Some say that the infamous masquerade balls of King Azalin of Darkon have been known to feature this depravity as one of the many debaucheries available to those in attendance.

The drug has also been used on occasion to gain information necessary for some criminal investigation by allowing an investigator to relive the life of a deceased person in an effort to gain information in that person's possession to pursue some just end. Although this use of the drug is less morally perverse, it is probably just as dangerous; the experience of living another's life, combined with the mental euphoria produced by the drug, are extremely addictive. A person who begins using the drug for the most altruistic purposes may end a slave to desires perverted beyond description.

The effects of the drug usually last for about twelve hours. For each use of the drug the user must make a Madness check at DC 10 + the number of times the drug has been used; if the check fails the personality absorbed may become dominant in times of stress or injury.

Each failed check adds another personality which may so manifest itself.

## Examples of stress

Losing more than half one's hit points, falling under the influence of an enchantment, failing a Fear or Horror check, extreme grief or anger, and life-threatening illness are all examples of stresses which might result in the manifestation of another personality. In such a case, the DM should make a Charisma check for the person and for the absorbed personality (if more than one personality, choose one randomly). If the absorbed personality has the higher Charisma check, that personality now dominates the body. Check at six-hour intervals until the person regains control of his body. These ought to be regarded as general guidelines only; the Dungeon Master is encouraged to use these occurrences in any way which will further the adventure without letting the dice rule the outcome overmuch.



## HEROIC BIRDS OF PREY

### TWO AVIAN SHAPECHANGERS IN RAVENLOFT

By: Hugo Viegas  
Nascimento  
and Luiz Eduardo Neves  
Peret

A pair of winged non evil  
werecreatures to enhance  
your scenario. Also  
usable as player  
characters, but not  
without some challenge.

**AUTHORS' NOTE:** this article was originally intended as a conversion text on the Owlmay (originally found in the Book of Shadows) to the d20 system. Later on, encouraged by the new, more open-minded view the system has taken on some creatures, we decided to also submit a new, revised version of the Werehawk, which was originally intended for the BoS\_ series but never quite reached it.

### Introduction

Many are the tales told of evil creatures who deceive unwary travelers, taking human form and accompanying them, claiming that a trip in group is safer, only to change into a bestial animal or abominable hybrid form in the middle of the night, under the light of the full moon, and rip their companions to pieces. Many other tales tell of those who survive the encounter but become infected with a hunger for human flesh, and eventually give in to their newfound bestial senses, turning their families and loved ones into their first victims.

However, a few such creatures, which are indeed able to change between humanoid and animal form, forged a pact with nature and are sworn to defend it, while others actively hunt down monsters and protect the weak and defenseless. This is the tale of two such rare types of creature, who take advantage of their bestial qualities for higher intentions.

### Owlmay

Owlmayes are members of a unique sorority, known to a few as the Silver Feather, dedicated to protect natural life at all costs. They are all female humanoids or monstrous humanoids who, after having proved themselves worthy, receive a magical token, which allows them to change into the shape of an owl or dire owl. No one outside the society knows the reason for such an animal to represent the order.

The owl is seen differently from culture to culture: for some, it is a symbol of wisdom. For others, it is avoided as an omen of ill fortune and death to someone loved. For the owlmayes themselves, the owl is a night hunter, a fast and silent, efficient killer, and a bane to several animals, such as rats and snakes, who serve as archetypes for evil creatures and symbols for cults who are used to act detrimentally to the natural environment. At the same time, the owl is a natural, neutral animal, and the only evil the owlmayes usually see in their totem animal is the evil in the eyes of those who misunderstand the truth.

Almost all owlmayes are druids or rangers, but sometimes the sorority will invite a female of some different background and class to join its ranks. This is a rare occurrence and the female is normally chosen in secrecy and discreetly approached after having performed

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some major deed in favor of nature. After being chosen, and if she has the requirements, the female is taught the mysterious art of creating her own feathered token. Each token normally works only for the owlmay who created it. Sometimes, as with a new member who has no spellcasting abilities and cannot craft magical items, or does not meet the minimum level requirements, the member who approached and tutored the neophyte may craft the item with her.

Owlmayes are not always good, though. Some will attack humanoid communities if they perceive the community's advancement into a forest or up a hill, for example, as a threat to nature. While most owlmayes would first try to reason with the settlers, some will take a direct, harmful approach. For that reason, combined with people's natural fear of what they do not understand, owlmayes are viewed with mixed feelings by those few who recognize them for what they are.

Adding to this matter, the owlmay is very dependant on her feathered token, the symbol of the sorority and of her link with nature: without it, the owlmay is unable to change shapes, unless the person has such ability by any other means, as with the case of a druid. Even then, however, the character is unable to shapeshift to owl or dire owl forms, much to her frustration.

Besides, the owlmay is trapped in a 1-mile-radius area around the item's current location. If she tries to leave the area, she will painfully lose 1hp per day until she dies or returns. This loss cannot be healed naturally or magically. If the owlmay returns to the area, the loss stops and can be cured normally or through magic. If she is trapped in animal form, anyone holding the token can understand the owlmay as if a permanent Speak with Animals spell had been cast.

If the token is destroyed (treat it as a magic item with hardness 10 and  $\frac{1}{2}$  the character's hit points; its saves are equal to  $2 + \frac{1}{2}$  the character's level save values), then the owlmay is trapped within a 1-mile radius of the

item's last location, with the same effects described above. She may craft a new token, but this is not an easy task, especially if she is trapped.

Once per month she spends without the token, the owlmay must make a Madness save (DC10 +1 per month passed). The resulting madness can only be cured after the owlmay successfully crafts a new token. If she failed the save, she cannot perform this task without help of another owlmay. Without help, her insanity prevents her from successfully channeling the natural energies necessary to create the item. No one outside the Sorority knows how to craft this item, and its manufacture requires some rituals exclusive to the owlmayes. It has no regular market value, as it looks like a simple feathered ornament, but some collectors and spellcasters (usually evil ones) might pay high prices for an authentic feathered token.

At the DM's discretion, a female PC might be invited to become an owlmay. Most likely, she would have to give up her adventuring life to become a caretaker of the natural environment. If she ever loses her token, she will have to pay a dire price to create another, especially if she is trapped in an area without the proper resources. Given the specific powers of the token, the DM is encouraged to lower its value for purposes of item creation.

(\*) If working together and performing the correct rituals, two or more owlmayes can greatly reduce the minimum requirements and costs established by the DM.

## The Owlmay Template

"Owlmay" is a template that can be added to any female humanoid, monstrous humanoid or (more rarely) shapechanger (referred to hereafter as the "character"). If the creature's type was not "shapechanger", it changes now. Unlike a lycanthrope, the owlmay can take two animal forms, owl and dire owl, but no hybrid form. The owlmay uses either the

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character's or animal's statistics and special abilities in addition to those set out below:

**Hit Dice:** same as the character's or the animal's (compare with the Dire Owl, 3d8+3, average 16hp), whichever produces the higher hit point total.

**Speed:** same as the character or animal, depending on the form used.

**AC:** whichever the form used, natural armor increases by +2.

**Attacks/Damage:** same as the character or animal, depending on the form used.

**Special Attacks:** same as the character when in humanoid form. The other two forms have no special attacks of their own.

**Special Qualities:** same as the character of animal, depending on form used. The owlmay also gains the following special qualities:

**Alternate Form (Su):** as though using the Polymorph Self spell. This ability is solely dependant on the existence of the owlmay's feathered token in direct contact with her skin. Gear and clothes do not change. The owlmay can stay indefinitely in the form taken and has full control of this ability, keeping her original Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma in any form. If slain, the owlmay returns to her humanoid form, even if the token is absent or is destroyed. The owlmay is not a lycanthrope and cannot be affected by spells designed specifically for such creatures.

**Claustrophobia (Ex):** owlmay become highly claustrophobic after they get used to changing shapes, even if the character was able to assume other forms. This weakness accompanies the owl totem and applies only to her animal forms. Whenever she enters an obviously enclosed space, such as a cave, in animal form, the owlmay must succeed at a Fear save (base DC10) or suffer the usual effects, until she leaves the area and finds open sky.

**Damage Reduction (Ex):** in any of her animal forms, the owlmay has damage reduction 10/+1.

**Superior low-light vision (Ex):** as a magical boon, the owlmay in either of her animal forms can see five times as well as a human in dim light.

**Saves:** the base saves are as for the character or animal, whichever is better. Owlmay receive a +2 racial bonus to Fortitude and Will saves.

**Abilities:** the owlmay's ability score adjustments are as follows:

Owl: Str -4, Dex +6, Wis +4

Dire owl: Str +6, Dex +6, Con +2, Wis +4

**Skills:** in humanoid form, the owlmay receives a +4 racial bonus to Listen, Search and Spot checks. In both animal forms, these bonuses increase to +8, +12 to Spot in dusk and darkness. In dire owl form, the owlmay receives a +8 racial bonus to Move Silently when flying; in owl form, this bonus increases to +14.

**Feats:** same as the character. When in either animal form, the owlmay receives Alertness as a bonus feat if she did not have it already. In owl form, she also gains Weapon Finesse (claws) as a bonus feat. It is not uncommon for the owlmay to take the Silent Spell and Still Spell feats in order to cast spells in animal form.

**Climate/Terrain:** same as the character or animal, usually temperate and/or cold forests and hills.

**Organization:** usually solitary or pair (with her tutor)

**Challenge Rating:** as the character or animal +2, whichever is higher.

**Treasure:** standard.

**Alignment:** any, sometimes limited by the character's class restrictions.

**Advancement:** by character class.

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## Lycanthrope, Werehawk

In the desert lands of Har'Akir, people labor every day under the watchful eye of Ra, the sun god. A few elders of the village of Muhar tell tales of ancient times, when the town was part of a great empire, now buried under the sands. They whisper of how the legendary Pharaoh Ankhtepot, once the high priest of Ra, challenged the very king of the Gods in his quest for eternal life, and ultimately tormented priests of all gods, including those of his own patron god, and how the priests finally exacted justice on him.

Some less known tales talk of a small group of dedicated warriors and priests, who were so favored under the eye of Ra that the deity granted them a special blessing, making them no longer part of mere mankind. They were to be His holy warriors and come after anyone who dared speak against the gods and act against justice, protecting the weak and defenseless.

But alas, when the heretic pharaoh was at last entombed, a strange fate came upon his gargantuan mausoleum, known as Pharaoh's Rest, and the area around it, including Muhar. The whole land changed and moved, and the once mighty empire disappeared, leaving only a few ruins as a mute witness to Ankhtepot's greatness and to the glory of the gods.

Most of the good warriors were scattered and lost in the turmoil, but a few managed to reach the Land of Mists through other ways. Sometimes, one or more members of that once powerful holy order will come to Har'Akir to help and guide the people there, or to fight against the followers of sworn Enemy of Light, the evil god Seth. But sometimes these warriors of light will eventually look for other paths to follow, for new and greater evils to fight. Eventually, those few brave warriors disappear once again in the desert sands and no one knows of them anymore, whether they found their way back to their homeworld or were destroyed by the overwhelming darkness

of the Land of Mists, for such is the fate of many heroes.

While most of the few werehawks who can be found in Ravenloft are either priests of Ra, rangers or fighters, less than a handful might be true paladins. Some are looking for ways to return to their original land, while others try their best to fight whatever evils they find in the Land of Mists. Most male werehawks shave their heads completely, following the conventional fashion for devoted followers of the Akiri Pantheon. Both genders usually dress in pure white linen and adorn themselves with jewels made of bronze, lapis lazuli and rubies. For them, passing werehawk lycanthropy is the same as offering a special divine approval to a chosen one, and they do not share this blessing lightly.

True werehawks have two forms, animal and hybrid. The animal form is similar to a golden, slightly larger-than-normal hawk (Small size), with no trace of humanity, while the bipedal hybrid form is Medium-sized, with the head and clawed feet resembling those of a golden hawk, and arms stretching into feathered wings.

Unfortunately, not even those who once were regarded as the god's favorites are immune to the inherent evil that seems to come from the land itself. Eventually, most lycanthropes fall to their dark desires and bestial instincts, and werehawks are no exception. There are unconfirmed reports of an evil, ruthless warrior with the head of a hawk roaming the Core. This creature seems to have hailed from Falkovnia, what suggests that Vlad Drakov might have come across this rare breed of shapechanger and found it most pleasant to his own twisted, degenerated tastes. Only time will tell if these tales are true.

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## The Werehawk Template

“Werehawk” is a lycanthropic template that can be added to any humanoid (referred to hereafter as the “character”), although this specific breed of shapechangers traditionally spreads their lycanthropy only to humans, and then almost exclusively to humans from Har’Akir or from the land from which that domain originated. The vast majority of them follow the worship and teachings of Ra, the Sun God and head of the Akiri Pantheon. The creature type changes to “shapechanger”.

**Hit Dice:** usually same as the character’s, according to class levels (it is extremely rare to find a 1st-level werehawk commoner).

**Speed:** same as the character or animal, depending on the form used.

**AC:** whichever the form used, natural armor increases by +2. In animal form, the Small size grants an additional +1 to AC.

**Attacks/Damage:** same as the character or animal, depending on the form used. In animal form, the character receives an additional +1 size bonus to attack.

**Special Attacks:** same as the character when in humanoid form. The other two forms have only the curse of lycanthropy and lycanthropic empathy special attacks (see the Monster Manual, page 218).

**Special Qualities:** same as the character of animal, depending on form used. The werehawk also gains the alternate form, claustrophobia (see the Owlmay entry above), damage reduction 15/silver as animal or hybrid, chemical bane

(nightshade) and hunger special qualities (see Ravenloft Core Rulebook, pages 188-189).

**Saves:** the same as the base character or animal, whichever is better. Also, werehawks gain a racial bonus of +2 to Fortitude and Will saves.

**Abilities:** the werehawk’s ability score adjustments are as follows:

Hawk Form: Str –2, Dex +6, Wis +4

Hybrid Form: Str +2, Dex +4, Con +2, Wis +4

**Skills:** in humanoid form, the werehawk receives a +4 racial bonus to Listen, Search and Spot checks. In both animal and hybrid forms, these bonuses increase to +8 (+12 to Spot in daylight).

**Feats:** same as the character. In animal or hybrid form, the werehawk gains the Weapon Finesse (claws) feat as a bonus.

**Climate/Terrain:** same as the character or animal, usually temperate and/or cold forests and hills.

**Organization:** usually solitary or pair.

**Challenge Rating:** as the character or animal +2, whichever is higher.

**Treasure:** standard.

**Alignment:** always lawful, usually good.

**Advancement:** by character class.





## UPIR LICHY - Third Edition

### THE FROSTBITTEN VAMPIRE RISES AGAIN IN THIRD EDITION

By: Eddy Brennan  
(The Lost Hedgewitch)

A vampire for frozen lands. This article is a third edition update of an undying favorite, with template and its own path of darkness !

In the advent of the update of the Ravenloft setting to the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, the original version of the Upir Lichy has become somewhat outdated in the eyes of gamers both new to the system and those older ones that have moved with the times. It is due to these changes that a new version must be delivered to those that wish to use the Upir Lichy in their games.

After some experimenting with ideas, I have gone back to the principles that gave birth to the original ideas behind the 2nd Edition monster, making it an extension, or variant if you will of the Vampire already available. Like the original Upir Lichy, there are significant differences between these distant cousins. Also, whilst the Frozen Reaches now has a canon vampire type, the Vrykolaka, the Upir Lichy is based closer to the Siberian theme of Vorostokov.

### Upir Lichy Template

Upir Lichy dwell in the frozen wastelands, forests and glaciers of Vorostokov.

They are greatly feared by the Voros and some are superstitious enough to make signs of protection even in the event of merely thinking of these fell beasts. These superstitions have given birth to many rumors of the weaknesses and strengths these creatures hold, some true, some farfetched.

They make their homes outside society, what there is of it in the frozen land they dwell in, making lairs from buried cave networks, glacial fractures and so forth. If their new home is already inhabited, it won't be for long, the undead beast feeding on whatever warmth the inhabitant provides.

The Upir Lichy is a feral, despicable creature with long talons and fangs, wild hair sprouting out of its head, back, shoulders and forearms. It is wrapped in ancient remains of what may have once been called clothing. Its eyes show intelligence, though it shows no symbol of remorse, nor kindness, as it drains the life from its hapless victims, drained of all their body heat in the icy wastes of Vorostokov, a land caught in an eternal winter. They are physically lean, almost malnourished and pale beyond that of any living thing; these undead, akin to the common vampire, are always feared, whether encountered or not in their chilled homeland.

In recent years, the Vrykolaka of Sanguinia has begun to make their presence in Vorostokov. Upir Lichy take this presence as a threat to their standing in the domain and have little love for their distant cousins. Regardless of how a Vrykolaka regards an Upir Lichy in meeting, the latter is always hostile to the former in some respect. Likewise, Upir Lichy share

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little respect or care for the Arayashka. However, these creatures are known to form fragile allegiances with an Upir Lichy for brief periods.

For further information on the habitat and ecology of these creatures, read the Upir Lichy article in the Book of Shadows, available on the Secrets of the Kargatane Website.

## Creating a Upir Lichy

The Upir Lichy is a template that may be added to any humanoid or monstrous humanoid. The creature (hereafter referred to as the “base creature”) must have died at the hands of another Upir Lichy’s Freezing Touch ability. The creature’s type changes to “undead.” It uses the base creature’s statistics except where noted here. Upir Lichy retain all special abilities of the base creature.

**Hit Dice:** Upgrade the creature’s current hit dice to d12.

**Speed:** Increase the creature’s speed by 10. The creature gains a Burrow speed at  $\frac{3}{4}$  their original speed allowance (rounded down).

**Armor Class:** The Upir Lichy has +9 natural armor, plus bonuses for Dex, plus any armor or feats the Upir Lichy may have.

**Attacks:** The Upir Lichy retains all natural attacks and weapon proficiency. Their hands become claw like, allowing the creature to make 2 claw attacks each round, all attack rolls are made with the creature’s old base attack bonus with anything gained from the Upir Lichy’s strength score and feats for unarmed attacks. These barehanded attacks do not provoke attacks of opportunity.

**Damage:** Upir Lichy may use weapons, but they favour the use of their claws in battle; these wicked talons inflict 1d3 + Str bonus damage and Drain Heat each time a successful blow is landed.

**Special Attacks:** The Upir Lichy retains whatever special attacks it had in life and gains the following.

**Freezing Touch (Ex):** This works identically to that of the Arayashka, but the Upir Lichy makes two of these attacks each round, once with each claw.

**Surprise (Ex):** If the Upir Lichy is burrowing when encountered, it gets a single free attack against 1 target at the start of combat. The target is Flat-footed.

**Children of the Night (Su):** Upir Lichy may summon Winter Wolves. These creatures arrive in 1d10 rounds (so long as any are within 1 mile) and remain under the creature’s control for 2d6 rounds. After this period, the aura of the Upir Lichy terrifies them, causing the wolves to flee.

**Fearful Essence (Su):** An Upir Lichy exudes a Fearful aura on all living creatures within 30 ft. The aura causes Fear checks DC 15 by all onlookers and always results in either minor or moderate results. This aura is automatic and requires no action on the Upir Lichy’s part.

**Gaze (Su):** The Upir Lichy has a 5 ft gaze attack that counts as a free action, causing all in melee with it to make Will Saves at DC 18. Failure results in 1d4 rounds of paralysis.

**Special Qualities:** As base creature, plus the following.

**Damage Reduction (Su):** Upir Lichy are treated as Mature Vampires in regard to damage reduction.

**Fast Healing (Ex):** Upir Lichy recover 3 lost hit points each round. This regeneration cannot recover hit points lost to sunlight.

**Undead:** As undead, Upir Lichy share all common immunities that vampires have on reaching the Mature age.

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**Alternate Form (Su):** Upir Lichy may take on two other forms: these are Winter Wolf and Chill Mist. Transforming to and from any of these forms counts as a full round action.

- *Winter Wolf*: Spd 50, Atk 1 Bite, Dmg 4d8, all other statistics remain as the Upir Lichy's.

- *Chill Mist*: AC as Upir Lichy -4, Spd 35, Atk None, all other statistics remain as the Upir Lichy's. In its mist form, the Upir Lichy may pass through snow as easily as it can through air.

**Saving Throws:** As Mature Vampire.

**Abilities:** Str +6, Dex +6, Con -, Int +1, Wis +2, Cha as base creature divided by 4.

**Skills:** As base creature, plus the Upir Lichy gains the Wilderness Lore, Knowledge (Nature) skills, provided that the base creature already does not have these skills.

**Feats:** As base creature, plus Improved Initiative, Toughness.

**Climate/Terrain:** Cold Lands.

**Organization:** Solitary.

**Challenge Rating:** as base creature and class +2.

**Treasure:** None.

**Alignment:** always Chaotic Evil.

**Advancement:** Upir Lichy advance as other Vampires, beginning at mature level.

## Feeding & Creating Offspring

The Upir Lichy only requires 1 heat level each day to sustain itself. Whenever an Upir Lichy drains a humanoid creature completely of heat, it has a 15% chance of rising as an Upir Lichy 1d3 days after it was slain. Unlike other Vampires, this new Upir Lichy is free willed.

**Weaknesses:** Upir Lichy may remain in sunlight for 10 minutes, then suffer 1d12 damage each further round they are exposed to it. If impaled with an icicle, the Upir Lichy is immobilized. Mirrors made from silver or ice repel them for 2d4 rounds. Holy symbols and vestments of any

Good or Neutral faith inflict 1d6 damage to Upir Lichy on contact. Natural creatures distract Upir Lichy, causing them to suffer -2 penalties to all attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks and armor class.

**Allergens:** Each Upir Lichy has allergens unique to itself, no two Upir Lichy share the same deadly weaknesses, even if they share the same creator. Examples of allergens may be frozen animal meat, a weapon or item they owned in life, the symbol of the deity they followed, the presence of a family member, the list is endless. Allergens should mark the almost-guaranteed destruction of a beast, causing it great discomfort and pain in its presence.

## Playing the Upir Lichy

The Upir Lichy should pose a challenge to characters of all types and levels that find themselves in Vorostokov. Whilst the domain includes the Cold Dangers described in the DMG, the Upir Lichy feeds more into these dangers, being able to subject even the most protected character to the environment with a single touch.

Whilst it should be avoided in playing an Upir Lichy without it being the center of the current adventure, such encounters may be possible to introduce the threat for later adventures detailing the growing activity of the creature and the eventual hunt to destroy it.

If an Upir Lichy is used in combat, they will always do battle only if they have the advantage over their enemies. It prefers to strike with surprise, making use of its burrowing ability. It will also use its Chill Mist form to follow its victims for some time before moving in. Upir Lichy are cunning and know the terrain well within a couple days travel of their lairs, making it impossible to trap or surprise the creatures in these areas. Their lairs are well hidden, normally below ground, making them impossible to follow if forced to retreat. Persistent characters may find this lair in time,

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though at great danger to themselves from the Upir Lichy, should it discover their presence.

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## Track of the Upir Lichy

The Upir Lichy is a strange creature, created in complete defiance of nature and all her ways. It is rare that for any new members of this race to arise, even rarer for someone to become such a creature without another Upir Lichy being responsible. Those that fall into this path find it swift and unforgiving, leaving them devoid of all compassion, filled only with hatred for anything that lives and an eternally unquenched hunger.

Those that become Upir Lichy's are yet to become a Darklord through doing so. However, as it hasn't happened yet, it doesn't mean it never will, given the proper person.

**Stage 1:** The character becomes immune to all forms of cold, leaving the character with constant shivers, causing a -2 Attack and Ref Save penalty. The penalty also relates to all checks made for skills using Dex as its key ability.

**Stage 2:** As the coldness the character feels becomes more extreme, her skin turns pale and dry with many cracks and wrinkles. Her hands also become claws that inflict 1d3 damage per unarmed attack, these attacks do not provoke attacks of opportunity. These changes cause her Cha ability to be reduced by 3.

**Stage 3:** The characters body changes further, becoming physically lean and supple. These changes increase her Str and Dex scores by 4; +10 speed and +4 to AC. Her body seems malnourished, causing her Cha to be reduced by half, her shaking also becomes worse, causing a further -3 Attack and Ref Save penalty. The penalty also relates to all checks made for skills using Dex as its key ability. She also suffers a -3 penalty on her Will Saves.

**Stage 4:** The character is no longer able to consume food or drink; doing so causes extreme nausea and debilitating illness. She also gains the Upir Lichy's Drain Heat ability, gaining all sustenance through this method. Use of this ability may provoke further Powers Checks if used on non-evil creatures without consent.

**Stage 5:** The character finds her metabolic rate increasing to unbelievable levels, allowing her to regain 3 lost hit points each turn. Her unnatural qualities cause her to inflict a Fear Aura on all living non-evil natural creatures within 30 ft of her. Sunlight inflicts 1d3 damage to the character for each whole and part of a turn she remains unprotected in its presence.

**Stage 6:** The character loses all penalties to attacks, saves and skill checks at a rate of 1 point per day. Once the last of these penalties fade, she finds herself pass through the final changes and dies, becoming an Upir Lichy.



# THE VAN RICHTEN GUIDE TO THE LESSER UNDEAD

By: Joel Paquin  
(Gotten Grabmal)

This "recently released" Van Richten guide is about the "lower" undead types, those that were not covered in previously released Van Richten guides. More specifically, this guide is about : skeletons, zombies (with a section for Souragnan zombies), ghouls, ghastrs, shadows, wights and wraiths.

**T**he old man didn't answer at first when someone knocked on his door. He finished writing the long sentence he was working on, and put the black quill back into the ink bottle. Absent-mindedly touching the black ring on his middle finger with his thumb, he turned toward the door and said, quietly, "enter, my dear".

Hearing him, an old woman, at least as old as he was, entered the library, holding a small package in her shriveled hands. She was nearly eighty but was walking without any aid, like a woman 30 years younger. She walked toward him and kissed him on the forehead. "Dearest", she said, "dinner is ready in a few minutes. The maid just told me so".

*Handing him the package, she added, "We received this a few moments ago... it's from the twins", she said, a discreet smile on her face.*

*He smiled back at her and said "Oh? From the twins? I'll have a quick look".*

*"Sure, my friend. But don't forget what I just said about dinner," she hushed before leaving the library, quietly closing the door behind her.*

*He opened the letter accompanying the package. The handwriting was a feminine one he recognized. Graphology was a new science he enjoyed and a lot of personality for the letter's writer could be observed even from the briefest glance at this handwriting. Lord Balfour de Casteelle put the letter on the desk in front of him and scanned it with his magical pince-nez. The arcane glasses showed him a message written with invisible ink and it made him smile.*

*The message was: "My friend, there is nothing hidden this time! Please send our regards to Mrs. Balfour de Casteelle. GWF".*

*He put back the reading glasses in his pocket and read the letter:*



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Mordentshire,  
December 1st, 756

Lord Balfour de Casteelle,  
Kind elders of the Dementlieu University,

As a possible surprise to most of you, and a great pleasure for us, please find in this parcel a copy of a new "Van Richten's Guide". This copy is the first of 250 more and, given our long collaboration, we both think it appropriate that the University of Dementlieu should receive the first one.

To dissipate all possible doubts quickly, we, the late nieces of Rudolph van Richten, Gennifer and Laurie Weathermay-Foxgrove, didn't write it. This new book is one of the numerous projects on which our uncle was working on before he disappeared.

As some of you may know, our uncle was very proud of us and of course the reverse was true. We are only two of a high number of persons for which Dr. van Richten was an inspiration in the endless quest against evil. Among our other projects, it is of importance for us to publish this posthumous "Van Richten's Guide."

This guide is based on notes recently found by us, among other interesting private papers of our uncle, in a hidden compartment of his library on the second floor of his herbalist shop's office. You will understand that most of these papers will remain confidential, but we decided to publish the "Van Richten's Guide to the Lesser Undead", however incomplete, as a posthumous tribute to the great hero that was our uncle. We deciphered his notes and organized the book as we think he would have liked us to do. Of course, as he didn't have time to finish it, you will understand that this guide is much shorter than the previous ones.

As most educated persons know, during his career our uncle did publish guides on most types of greater undead, as well as a guide to the Vistani and to fiends. This project he was working on before he disappeared is on the "lower" undead, the more common ones.

This time, our uncle discusses the mindless ones: skeletons and zombies, also called the animated undead. But it also covers "mid-sized" undead horrors that multiply by killing a live being, who is then transformed as one of their undead kin. These are the ghouls, ghasts, shadows, wights and wraiths.

As our uncle found out during his long career, battling powerful foes, some twisted variations can be observed on these lower undead as well, and he thought it useful to warn undead hunters about the possibilities they could face.

As our uncle said, reliable information is often the difference between modest success and miserable failure.

Best regards,

Gennifer Weathermay-Foxgrove

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

Laurie Weathermay-Foxgrove

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## Introduction

This guide is focused mainly for lower-level parties, as I often felt the already published Van Richten Guides (VRG's) are mostly for higher-level parties: they discuss the "greater" undead, i.e. usually those with high hit dice, who represent tougher challenges; and it isn't easy to introduce these undead to lower level campaign.

But this particular guide isn't exclusively for lower level parties, as a large concentration of these "lower" undead can represent a threat to more experienced parties as well. Also, these variations can be useful to present new "signature" minions for a villain in your campaign.

My goal was to revisit those staple undead, to provide DM's some interesting variations on those old themes, "forgotten" in the previously released Guides. The variations proposed will not alter the monster description greatly, but could keep the players in your campaign guessing or surprised. As you will see, most of the changes are not major twisted changes, but they are enough to disturb players without having them think they are facing a brand new monster.

Variety keeps the player guessing, and an element of uncertainty is what keeps an encounter interesting.

This guide is for DM's eyes only. It was not written the way the other "official" VRG's were made, i.e. as a "published" book in the world of Ravenloft, available for players to read. A DM could of course make such a book available in his campaign, but he should adapt this text for the players as it was made primarily for DMs.

Also, this guide is not a repetition of what's inside the D&D Core Rulebook III (Monster Manual), and the third edition Ravenloft books (Ravenloft Core Rulebook, Denizens of Darkness, etc.), but it is an expansion of these, which are still needed to play.

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## General Notes on the Undead

### Undead Immunities

As a reminder, most undead are immune to many spells, like cold-based spells (so a necromancer does not need to calculate precisely the area of effect of cold-based spells to avoid hurting his minions [RL-Dylan Brooks]). They are immune to most mind-affecting spells (ex: those with effects like sleep, charm, etc.), as well as those that are life-affecting (ex: *finger of death*). Also, they are not affected by disease or poison. Using illusions is also hazardous as many can see through this magic or will simply ignore it.

### Detect Life Option

The undead that are able to drain the vitality of live beings (whether it is energy levels, or ability scores such as Strength or Constitution) are able to *feel* life around them. This supernatural ability is called "*detect life*." It is unsure as to how and why it works but perhaps they "feel" the proximity to life force because of their Negative Plane connection and of their need to feed the energy of the living. That ability is always in action and the undead do not need to concentrate on it. The undead "feels" a live being, even if invisible or hidden.

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The range of that ability is always 60' but its range differs according to undead type, from wight (where this ability is limited to the direction they look at, i.e., a 45- degree cone facing them), from the shadow and wraith (where this ability is 60' radius *around* their body). A solid object (ex: a door) blocks this ability.

If allowed in your campaign, this dreaded ability greatly diminishes the potential hiding ability of a rogue, or the cover of an *invisibility* spell (but not to spells specifically granting invisibility to undead creatures), and it also explains in part why these undead are not affected by illusion spells. Also, this ability grants the undead an advantage to not be surprised.

## Spells Cast on Undead

There are many necromantic spells designed with the objective to improve the subject undead. Many of these incantations were designed in Darkon or Souragne, but they are now found in many dark places of the Core and the Islands.

Also, since a few decades, there are rare but steady reports from various parts of the Core and the islands, about a new demon cult in Ravenloft. That horrific cult is worshipping a demon with the name of Orcus, the demon prince of undead... (BoVD - Thrall of Orcus prestige class).

So these necromancers worked on new spells to improve their minions. For instance, cast on undead, these spells can fool undead detection spells, or transform the undead into an extension of the mage's senses.

While the goal of that guide is not to analyze in length the dark powers of necromancers, it is useful to warn adventurers, to review some of the rare spells allowing undead transformation, with a summary of their effect.

**DM's note:** the publishing reference is provided. Most of these were from 2<sup>nd</sup> edition publications that can be found as downloadable ESD, in Dragon magazine CD-Rom, etc. You should first try to find it, otherwise the spell's name is followed by a summary description to help you in creating your own.

- **Spectral Ears** (mage 1<sup>st</sup> level): By casting this spell on a zombie or a skeleton, a necromancer can hear what is going on in the undead's vicinity, duration:1 turn/level (DM, March 1991); In DoD, a similar spell is found: Eyes of the Undead (clerical and mage).
- **Spectral Eyes** (mage 1<sup>st</sup> level): Same as *spectral ears*, but sight is allowed instead, duration:1 turn/level (DM March 91). A 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of this is available in the BoVD: "Eyes of the zombie", but it's a more evil spell.
- **Spectral Voice** (mage 1<sup>st</sup> level): The caster can speak (not cast) through the undead, duration:1 turn/level. (DM, March 91);
- **Cloak of Undead** (mage 2<sup>nd</sup> level): The undead is undetectable by undead detection spells or devices and remains invisible, as long as it stays 15' from where the spell was cast, duration:1 round/level (FRA)
- **Unliving weapon** (priest 3<sup>rd</sup>) makes a bomb out of an undead, which explodes when attacked (1d6 per 2 levels in a 10 foot radius) (BoVD)
- **Augment undead** (3<sup>rd</sup> level) is a spell that increase the undead's resistance to being turned (VRA - 3<sup>rd</sup> ed; DoD- 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.).
- **Disguise Undead** (mage 5<sup>th</sup> level): The undead looks like it did when it was alive, and all undead smells are removed, duration:1 turn/level (FRA). Useful for vampires or other intelligent undead wishing to hide their nature.

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- **Imbue undead with spell ability** (mage 6<sup>th</sup> level): The caster places a spell on the undead, who can use it once (with a short casting time of "1" in D&D 2<sup>nd</sup> ed), duration: special (until discharged) (FRA)
- **Spellstitched:** in the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition Monster Manual II, Spellstitched is a template which improves undead with tattooed arcane powers: more resistant to turning and having spell abilities.

## Running

In April 2002, someone asked an interesting question to the sage Azalin Rex (on the Kargatane's "Ask Azalin" Message Board). The question was, "can an undead run practically forever, or not at all?". Azalin's answer was: "If a creature's speed doesn't include *"can't run,"* then it can. An exception would be zombies, due to their partial actions-only limitation. Yes, this does mean the undead can run "forever." Thus the saying, *the dead travel fast.*" DMs can use that characteristic when tracking PCs.

## Individuality

What differentiate the Ravenloft game from other fantasy settings is often the story behind all things. Ravenloft players and DMs like good stories. The previously released Van Richeten's guide put a great deal of efforts on the point that undeads are (or were, at least) individuals, with their own characteristics. Of course, it should be the same for the lower undeads - a DM would make a mistake if he or she considered lower undead only as generical monsters with stats.

Indeed, each undead was once a living person, with his or her own desires, dreams, motivations, manners, habits, preferences, etc. So, up to a certain point, the lower undead in Ravenloft *have* memories of their former life (except of course the mindless ones) and can *act* accordingly. So instead of just waiting for the PCs to hack them, they could be sometimes

driven by negative emotions such as lost love, sense of duty for their master or for a cause, melancholy for their past life, undying faith, remorse, an unending desire for justice, denial of their death, etc.

Some say the soul leave the body when the person turns to undeath. With the exception of mindless undead, Ravenloft undead do not loose their souls and that is why they are unique.

Some others believe that those undead who stayed in our realm because they wanted to finish a task or get avenged will vanish when that task will be done. Unfortunately, in Ravenloft, not always... The Dark Powers do not let a soul easily go to a peaceful afterlife... That soul gets bitter and angry when it is kept away from eternal peace.

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## This Guide's structure

Each of the lower undead has its own detailed section. Each section begins with the creation process, and is followed by some notes on their biology and appearance, then some notes on psychology, i.e. the mind of these undead. Each section ends with an "improvement" section, in which the variations observed by Dr. Van Richten or his adventuring friends are enumerated.

The usual "ecology" sections for monster description have been left out, as undead contribute nothing to living ecologies, except to create possible carrion in their vicinities, that attracts scavengers, rats, and insects. Also, in general, animals flee or howl in alarm when near undead, and birds and insects grow silent at the passage of such a creature. Plants wither and die near the lairs of most undead.

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## Skeletons

### Creation

As with zombies, skeletons are usually the magical creations of evil necromancers or priests, using spells such as *animate dead*. Some greater undead have that ability too. Skeletons are often a threat because they are relatively easy to create and are often found in large numbers.

Since they are very easy to create, skeletons are the most common undead found in this world, from Darkon to Sithicus and all places in between. They are less common in the northeastern Core, as necromancers in these domains with a higher cultural level usually shun the creation of such "inferior" creatures. Wherever they are created, they are viewed as cheap and expendable tools.

Casting *animate dead* on a still fleshed dead body to create skeletons has the effect of rendering the flesh loose, or no longer attached to the bones. When the skeleton moves, the flesh and organs drop on the floor and quickly rot, while the bones are thus cleaned (usually in less than 24 hours, the bulk falling off in the first hours). Making the skeleton go through water or sand hastens the cleaning from its flesh.

**Body and Soul Option:** In some campaigns, DM's may rule that casting *animate dead* on a body "severs" the link between the body and the soul, so a person animated as a skeleton or a zombie can't be raised back to life by the usual clerical spells (unless a *wish* or similar rare and powerful spell is cast first).

With this option, the *animate dead* spell gets a new, nastier, more evil, feel to it: it can still be used by evil casters to get new soldiers in battle from the fallen enemy forces, but it also has the effect of lowering the enemy's morale: indeed, it's not just that you have to fight a friend's body, you also know that this fellow adventurer is most probably forever lost...

**Animate Dead note:** The *Ravenloft d20 Campaign Setting* states that "you may add as many hit dice to your undead creations as you desire during casting, as long as the total does not exceed twice your caster's level". Thus in theory, a high level character like Azalin or Strahd could create skeletons or zombies with 30+ hit dice, which is quite high. While a 35 hit dice skeleton is only CR 8, you can put forward the option of a maximum hit dice for animated skeletons and zombies (ex: 10 HD), but this question is one of the famous "DM's prerogative".

### Appearance and Biology

Skeletons can be created from bodies that have been dead a short time (barely minutes) or a very long time (years). The bones are joined together by the spell's magic. The good condition of the skeleton when it is created is not of primary importance, and it isn't unusual

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to see crippled skeletons that were animated that way, or with wooden or iron tools fixed to them with a rope or iron string, as with a crude attempt at repair

The only important parts are the trunk and the head. Without these, the spell will not work. Some bodies without legs have been animated at times to serve the necromancer on a repetitive manual task or to take place in a war machine or in a trap. Also, that characteristic of the *animate dead* spell implies that some warriors who had to leave fallen comrades on the battleground have been known to cut the heads of their fallen companions to make sure they are useless to the enemy's necromancers.

A skeleton's presence is often accompanied by a light smell of decay or dust. The oldest skeletons can be brittle and can easily be destroyed (5% cumulative chance per decade of existence for this to happen, up to a maximum of 75%). Those are destroyed with just one hit point of damage, forming a cloud of dust where they stood. Option: that dust might be slightly poisonous). Also, if the skeleton has not moved for a long time, as they are often motionless until the specified condition of their command happens, it can be covered with spider webs, dust or plants, up to the point of sometimes being camouflaged.

While all flesh and organs are removed by the *animate dead* spell, some traces of clothing (often with dried blood stains) or armor (in fine or broken condition) can often be seen.

Also, with the proper attire, a skeleton could be made to physically look like a lich decoy, or as a knight's corpse with a full plate. A few theater tricks can make a skeleton look like a mean-looking monster from a distance (ex: fake bat wings, black cloak, crown, mask, etc.).

Their eyeballs are gone but skeletons can "see", usually with a 120' range (90 degree cone) in front of them, but some unusual longer ranges have been observed. Some have a green or red light flickering inside their eye sockets,

but one can usually see the empty skull through the eyes' orbits. They have the normal hearing sense as they had in life. Skeletons do not breathe, so they can be burrowed or left in water filled areas as guards.

Lastly, their temperature is the same as their surroundings, so they are invisible to infravision detection.

## Psychology

Skeletons are simply mindless automatons and will follow their orders that way, without thinking, without any initiative and will never draw any conclusion. For example, they can't "attack Pete" or "attack the spellcasters" as they can't identify persons. But if their controller is present, they could attack persons pointed by the necromancer. They never experience fear or doubt, or a morale check failure.

They obey simple commands, typically one or two short sentences (5-6 words each) maximum. A more elaborated order will probably fail to be executed (40% of the time, the skeleton doesn't react -- as if nothing had been ordered, and there is another 60% that the skeleton badly understood the command and will do something, somewhat related to the command, but with major execution flaws). The commands have to be spoken, as the *animate dead* spell doesn't create mind communication. They never a stop executing a given task, until it is ordered to stop or it is destroyed.

## Combat strategies

None; skeletons move toward the nearest opponent and attack until it is destroyed or if the victim is killed, usually with a weapon (sword or similar, but sometimes a bow). If they carry a shield, that protection is effective 30% of the time only (check each attack). If their order is "grapple the enemy and hold him," a group of skeletons can be very effective in holding down someone. A line of pike-holding skeletons can delay many adventurers in a hurry. They can



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also be told to set traps, without a concern for their own well being, or they could ring a bell even if the enemy is hitting it.

## Improvements

As they are mindless, they are treated with all kinds of changes and modifications. The limit of possibilities to alter a skeleton is left to the imagination of evil necromancers. As such, evil and twisted necromancers can install many magical (as well as mechanical) improvements. It should be noted that some magical improvements also have the effect of toughening the skeleton (giving it one additional hit dice, at DM's option).

### Mechanical improvements

- ◆ **Stuffed with insects.** The skeleton's rib cage has been stuffed with nasty things. The possibilities are numerous, and among the most annoying ones, there is the bee hive or other insects (spiders, worms, centipede, locusts) or wasps, etc. (see also Dustin's Rathburn's "*Hive Skeleton*" article in the Kargatane's *Book of Shadows* netbook)
- ◆ **Stuffed with bottles,** simply attached to the bones or the rib cage with strings (filled with acid or slime monsters) that explode on a hit, with possible splash damage on the attacker. Another deadly possibility is bottles with *sleep* gas (harmless to the skeleton themselves) or exploding potions.
- ◆ **Vecna's necromantic engineers have often used skeletons to make war machines.** Each skeleton is told to do one repetitive task, done endlessly. In such clockwork-like machines, the collective amount of individual tasks from a large number of assembled skeletons can make effective war machines. The possibilities are nearly endless, for example, advancing walls, two stories tall, of armored skeletons, fixed together with metal plates, with spears, spikes or lasso, told to attack cavalier on their horses. Evil necromancers from all

over the Core have adopted this idea and constructed their own nightmarish war machines.

### Magical improvements

- ◆ **Harder bones.** Some spells or alchemical methods are known to turn the skeleton's bone as hard as steel or hard stone (gives bonus to armor [from +1 up to +5 for the costliest treatment] and possible damage reduction [*Bones to Steel* spell from CNH]).
- ◆ **Continual Darkness.** Necromancers have been known to cast *continual darkness* on skeletons, and then giving them the instruction to walk until they find a wall, then turn back and change direction. A large number of these, moving randomly in a large room, can quickly add to the confusion of a battle scene in an unknown place, especially when level-draining undead are also in the room.
- ◆ **Blinding Gaze.** Others had their skulls filled with mirror shards and glass, plus a *continual light* spell, so beams of light shoot from their eye sockets, momentarily blinding their opponent (20% chance each round).
- ◆ **Electrical.** The skeleton is charged with magical electrical energy: their touch does a *shocking grasp* effect (1-8 hp damage), and the iron weapons hitting them do the same. The skeleton with that enchantment "discharges" after 2-8 contacts.
- ◆ **Animals skeletons.** Necromancers sometimes animate skeletons of small animals (rats, snakes, cats, etc. with *animated dead animals* [CNH]) and, with the proper command, bind a large group of these ( $\pm 20$ ) into an ensemble having a humanoid shape (could be made with zombie rats too). Necromancers who know such an incantation can use it to surprise opponents. The humanoid shape has 1-2 hit dice, and when reduced to zero hp the

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animal skeletons are unbound and attack. Each animal skeleton has 1-2 hp.

- ◆ **Skeletal Dread Companion:** a template for a familiar described in CoD.
- ◆ **Other spell effect.** These skeletons had spell abilities cast on them in the manner of a *contingency* spell (usable once, usually as their first action), ex: *burning hands*, *haste*, *mirror image*, *sleep*, *darkness*, etc.
- ◆ **Worms.** These uncommon magically enhanced skeletons have bone shards on their body. These skeletons attack with their fists and not with weapons. The shards penetrate the skin of a target when they hit, if they succeed in touching their opponent with a very successful dice (ex: higher by at least four than what's needed). The round after they hit, these shards transform into rot grub worm monsters.
- ◆ **Elite skeletons.** Made from a fighter's body, with the proper dark necromantic treatment, this skeleton is quicker than its ordinary cousin (+10 feet to move). Its number of hit dice is equal to half the number of warrior levels the body had in life, but they fight with the same skills they had while alive. These elite skeletons can use shields effectively, and some even use missile weapons such as bows.
- ◆ **Pile of bones.** At rest, these skeletons look like a dusty pile of bones. If the conditions of their command are met, the undead reassemble in one round and attack. At the DM's option, this sighting can be the cause of a fear check for lower level adventurers.
- ◆ **Blood skeleton.** These horrible blood-colored skeletons reassemble after they have been destroyed! (for more on these, see LR)
- ◆ **Crimson Skeleton.** It is said that persons tortured and flailed to death come back as one of these blood-dripping creatures (DeoD).

- ◆ **Confusing skeletons.** An illusion of a poorly-made illusory skeleton is cast on a skeleton, making the adventurers lose time trying to disbelieve it. A more effective method is mixing them with real illusions of skeletons (RL – Davide Bolcioni).
- ◆ **Pseudo-skeleton.** Actually a weak construct, conditioned to run if turned. It does regenerate one hit point per turn (unless acid or fire damage), and tracks the enemy to fight them again (RL – Davide Bolcioni). The more annoying ones are also conditioned to make as much noise as possible, ruining possible adventurers' efforts to remain unseen.
- ◆ **Pyro-skeleton:** a large giant skeleton, with its rib cage engulfed in eerie blue flames (DeoD).
- ◆ **Bone Creature** is a template from BoVD, for creatures that retain their former abilities when they are raised as skeletons.

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## Zombies

### Creation

Zombies are magical creations of evil necromancers or priests, as explained in the first section about skeletons.

The condition of the body isn't really important but at least 75% of its flesh and organs should be remaining on the corpse for a zombie to be created; otherwise, it's a skeleton that will be animated. As with the skeleton, the head is needed for a zombie to be animated.

The corpse's rotting process is greatly slowed but not stopped: a zombie can rot nearly forever.

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## Appearance and Biology

A zombie is a horrible sight, usually with pale gray skin (the color of rotting meat) and many blood red holes or bruises are seen on the skin. Its eyes are dead and not always focused front. Many have worms crawling on/in their rotting flesh.

Some (20%) zombies are created from less than perfect bodies, as seen in the following table (roll d10):

1-3	Missing hand (one attack every two rounds)
4-5	Missing arm (one attack every two rounds)
6-7	Missing feet (move diminished by 50%)
8	Missing leg (move diminished by 90%)
9	Missing part of head or hair (possible hearing or seeing problem)
10	Missing large part of the trunk (no combat penalty effect)

Also, zombies that have been in battle are often maimed (20% chance per battle, or for every 5 year of existence: roll d10 on previous table).

The rotting meat stench of zombies can usually be detected from a distance of 100 feet, and possibly more if a wind carries it in the right direction. However, except in tropical places where the air remains humid, zombies tend to somewhat dry, and the stench detection decrease by 10 feet for each year of existence of the zombie, down to a minimum of 30 feet.

In some very silent places, the noise of carrion flies feeding on the zombie's decaying flesh and fluids can also be heard from a distance. Zombies can see in the direction they are facing, up to the maximal human range. They have the normal hearing sense as they had in life.

As with skeletons, zombies do not breathe. So the legend of zombies madly burrowing from their grave through the ground to fill their lungs with air is, well, just a tale.

Even if they are flesh creatures, they do not need to eat or drink to survive as most biological functions have stopped.

## Psychology

Zombies are mindless automatons, being little more than walking corpses. However, they understand more complex orders than those understood by skeletons, up to 12 words per command. Usually, zombies do not speak; they often mutter guttural sounds or simple syllables, especially when they can't finish their ordered task.

If the zombie encounters someone it knew in life, there is a 20% chance per round that the zombie's dead brain will strangely react to that person's presence and have some kind of reminiscence that makes the zombie act horribly. The zombie will then say or do something very meaningful to that person. An ex-lover might try to embrace, a son might ask his father to go fishing, a zombie child tries to get in his parent's arms, etc. A horror check should be rolled for that player.

## Combat Strategies

Zombies have no combat strategies; they move toward their nearest opponent and attack until either party is destroyed. They do not use weapons as skeletons do, and zombies usually walk toward its victim with arms stretched and fight by slamming their fist on their opponent.

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## Improvements

### Mechanical improvements:

- ◆ **Stuffed with bottles.** The innards of a zombie can be stuffed with vials of miscellaneous deadly substances. Often used are acids (a possible bane to weapons, plus splash damage), poison, sleep gas or deadly fungi. Costly but very effective is to fill them with gunpowder and shrapnel (RL – W. Alexander).
- ◆ **Stuffed with vermin.** Some may be stuffed with worms, flesh-eating rut grubs and even crawling claws! The zombie then has the instruction to hug its victims (possible contamination and/or horror check when the contents get out of the body if hit).
- ◆ **Fire Zombies.** One of the most horrible necromantic methods to "improve" these once living persons is stuffing them with oil flasks. Those zombies are often found carrying a torch or are near an open fire. Just before combat, they light themselves to become human torches, and 20% of them explode, splashing fire and flesh in a 10 feet radius. The remaining zombies will fight while screaming and may add fire damage to their attacks before collapsing after two minutes.
- ◆ **Stuffed with bottles of baking soda and bottles of vinegar.** These bottles explode when hit, and the mixed chemicals cause white foam and bubbles to burst from the zombie's mouth and nose (distraction and possible horror check).

### Magical improvements:

- ◆ **Quickened zombies.** These have been magically quickened: their Move and Attack Bonus stats are doubled. This uncommon variety is usually used by necromancers (DM, October 1996).

- ◆ **Casting.** The necromancer who created them also magically instilled the ability to cast one spell per day (usually a 1<sup>st</sup> level spell).
- ◆ **Strahd's.** In Castle Ravenloft, Van Richten has reportedly seen some of the most horrible zombies created. They see invisible, regenerate like trolls and their severed members continue to attack (Gaz1 - 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. or Ravenloft MC 1 - 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.).
- ◆ **Increased toughness.** Dark necromantic treatments are rumored to increase the toughness of zombies. These zombies seem more "dense" when hit (increased hit points by 2-8 hit point per treatment. Can be cumulative. Other characteristics remain the same).
- ◆ **Cannibalistic zombies** are by chance rarely encountered. These creatures are hungry for the flesh of the living. They will start eating a fallen opponent even if other opponents remain fighting ! (Cannibal zombies in Ravenloft MC 3).
- ◆ **Physically transformed.** Zombies sometimes transformed like golems or broken ones: these can have four arms (double number of attacks, attempt to bear hug its victim), have sharpened (or rusted) knives or needles instead of fingers, or have the legs of a horse (quicker), etc. Many necromancers on the Islands of Terror (except Souragne) are fond of such modifications.
- ◆ **Zombie Insects.** In desert domains, evil high priests have been known to animate large biting insects as zombies. Sometimes, they keep many of these hidden in a chest or fake sarcophagus as guardians (RL – W. Alexander).
- ◆ **Lab zombie.** Inside secret laboratories, in the most advanced domains, there are zombies created out of dark scientific experiments (the Scientific Zombie, in the

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BoSorrrows - The Brotherhood of Mortis, by Mark "Mortavius" Graydon).

- ◆ **Zombie Lord.** This dreaded creature is by chance seldom encountered. That monster has all its former Intelligence and Wisdom, and dominates a pack of zombies (DeoD).
- ◆ **Spawn of Kyuss:** a variant of undead related to the undead God Kyuss, this creature create spawns by infections from the dreaded worms that crawl on its skin. Very uncommon in Ravenloft (*MMII*).
- ◆ **Corpse Creature** is a template from BoVD, for creatures that retain their former abilities when they are raised as zombie-like undead.
- ◆ **Zombie wolf** is an uncommon animal undead creature found in Forlorn (Gaz1).

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## Souragne 's zombies

As travelers know, the voodan priests of Souragne have great masteries on the creation and uses for zombies. Zombies are fairly easy to create and are found all over the Dread Realms, but it is in Souragne that the most evilly refined uses of zombies are found.

Voodan priests claim to have "magical formulas": some believe these are magical incantations, some believe these are based on alchemical concoctions. Van Richten, in his notes, suggested it could be a combination of both.

Zombies are an important part of local Souragnan lore. Voodan priests are feared; they are known to threaten people of bringing them back to eternal unlife as zombies after their death, or bringing back someone dear to them.

These are some the observed powers of voodan priests regarding undead:

- ◆ **Creation of "normal" zombie,** as the *animated dead* spell - but double the number of zombies created, which is very impressive in Ravenloft.
- ◆ **Zombie with animal intelligence:** when the Voodan priest's level is higher then 5<sup>th</sup>, these zombies are often more intelligent then their ordinary "brain-dead" cousins: the chance is 8% per level (up to a maximum of 66%) and the zombies have an intelligence score of 2-3. These zombies are known to use basical battle strategies, and can understand more elaborated commands, like a trained animal.
- ◆ **Speak with the dead.** Sometimes, a voodan priest raises a zombie to question it about something it knew while it was alive (location of treasure, witness information, etc.), even if the spirit would be uncooperative (15% per level of the priest that the zombie answers a question it would not normally answer, up to a maximum of 66%).
- ◆ **Voodan zombie.** The most horrifying powers of the voodan priest are the creation of zombies with their minds still attached to the body. So these zombies are not mindless automatons!

They have to be created within 24 hours of the person's death. One such zombie is created at a time, and only the voodan priests know the creation process.

### Game suggestions for Souragnan zombies:

#### When raised (up to 2-3 days):

- Intelligence: as previous as when alive, minus 1d6.
- Appear alive for 2-3 days, but body is somewhat stiffened.

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- All body functions still work, but are slowed. Zombies recently raised could eat or drink.
- Have all the abilities and knowledge they had in life
- Importantly, they do not always know they are dead, as voodoo priests often lie to the recently awakened, telling them they had an accident, a fever, illness, coma, etc.

## **After 2-3 days:**

- After that 2-3 day delay, the bodies start to smell and their decay starts. Body functions have stopped.
- Brain deterioration alters the abilities the zombies had in life: for each feat, skills, etc., a check of 70% should be succeeded for each ability in order to retain them. For classes, the check is 50% and a failed result means the level is divided by two (ex: a Fighter 4<sup>th</sup> level raised as such special zombie failed his check and now has the ability of a 2<sup>nd</sup> level fighter).
- In that stage, the zombie still has all of its knowledge it had while alive (other knowledge than abilities, feats, class, etc.)

## **Next to other full moon:**

- The brain deteriorates slowly: again, a check of 70% should be succeeded for each ability in order to retain them. For classes, the check is again 50%.
- They start forgetting other "general knowledge" as well, and a check of 70% should be used to verify if these undead still remember a specific part of their former knowledge.



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## Following full moons:

- The same checks for abilities should be used, as the zombies slowly forget everything.
- For "general knowledge", use a check of 49% for the first full moon from now on, 34% for the second, then 24%, 17%, 12%, 8%, 6%. After that, the zombies are considered mindless automatons.

**Control:** When he creates a zombie of that kind, the voodan priest has two options on the control he will have on the zombie - either full control or no control at all:

- *Full control:* the priest possesses the desiccated heart of the deceased person. With it, the voodan priest has a mental link with the zombie and can control it at will. The control is in fact similar to what vampires have on their spawn: the zombie can't resist his master's orders and the zombie will never hurt the voodan priest willingly. This eternal control is what Souragniens fear most. Souragnan priests can control one zombie this way at any given time.
- *No control at all:* as most of these do not realize they are dead, the uncontrolled zombie will usually resume its task as if nothing ever happened: try to take back its former place in a family, at work, etc., to the horror of those who see the person back and undead...

- ◆ **Poisoned and enslaved.** The term "Voodan zombie" is sometimes applied to living humans, drained of intelligence and wisdom by a poison, then enslaved by a voodan priest as zombie-like slaves (*Book of Souls*: "Voodan Zombie," by Bill Boozer).

- ◆ **Anton Misroi's.** For his estate in Souragne, he has created a special horrific breed of zombies, made out of children's corpses, and full of insects and vermin (the nightcrawler, *Book of Sorrows*: "Children of the Bayou," by Andrew Wyatt).

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## Ghouls

Unless specified otherwise, the text of this section applies to ghouls, lacedons or ghosts.

### Creation

As we often see during our lives, there are wicked humans among us. In life, some greedy individuals exploit without mercy or remorse the work of others: ruthless factory owners, blackmailers, zealous tax collectors, usurious money lenders, etc. While many of them seem to lead a tranquil life as abusers, the dark forces looming over Ravenloft do not let them die a peaceful death. It is said that many of Barovia's burgomeisters, Borca's corrupted nobles, or Darkon's barons have been brought back to unlife as ghouls after their death.

Other evil individuals enjoy the taste of human flesh. It doesn't make a difference whether this action is due to mental derangement (as an evil perversion for anthropophagous meals) or a need to survive in extreme conditions (ex: a group of mercenaries lost in the Balinok mountains, with nothing to eat, that didn't starve to death only by eating one of their comrades).

Only humans can become ghouls or ghosts: it seems the other races are never drawn by this cursed undeath. There are rumors of an elf ghoul that once haunted Sithicus, but this creature has never been reported killed or reliably confirmed.

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The chance of this undeath happening is 5%-30% for the exploiters of the work of others, depending on the harshness of their actions, and 5% each time a person eats human flesh, up to a maximum of 75%. It is up to the DM to decide if the person rises as a ghoul or a ghoul lord (see DeoD), perhaps judging on the evilness of the subject.

Other ghouls are created when killed by a ghoul, but not devoured, which is unusual, given their hunger for dead flesh. The ghoul was either killed or prevented from eating its victim. It takes a few days for the dead person to become a ghoul, unless a *protection from evil* spell is cast on the body before the person rises from the dead.

It should be noted that the ghoul does not control its spawn, so it has no real advantage of creating other ghouls, as it creates competition for the corpses they feed on.

## Appearance and Biology

A ghoul is a terrible sight to behold. It appears like a sickening humanoid, with dead gray flesh having the appearance of rotting meat. The skin is often covered with putrescent pimples and appears tightly drawn on the body. Their claws are long and sharp. Its eyes seem to be full of pure malignity, hatred and hunger.

Newly created ghouls are pale, and might pass as Lost Ones: they bear a grim facial expression and they can show beastlike ferocity in their attacks, while most of the sounds they emit are growls. They are definitively a source of surprise for those who do not know they are newly created ghouls, and who try to cure them of their "sudden insanity". The "normal" aspect of a ghoul is gained after 2-4 weeks.

A ghoul feeds on corpses, whatever the stage of putrefaction, whether the corpse is recently dead or is months old. This hunger is enormous and a ghoul could be eating for days without feeling it had enough. As undead (not living but not dead either), they digest what they eat. If they kill a person, there is a 20% chance

that they will ignore other living creatures to start feeding on the killed person. They attack zombies on sight to devour them, unless they are under the order of a powerful master preventing them to do so.

They will tear corpses into pieces and devour them, even cracking the bones and gnawing on them (this sight is the cause for a Horror check). With their long rasping tongue, they will suck the marrow out of the bone and lick the blood on the floor. In fact, when a ghoul feeds on a corpse, there is nearly nothing left of it (so there is nothing to use for *resurrection* or similar resurrection spells).

Their senses are keener than human senses, especially their sense of hearing. Daylight does not affect ghouls, but they hate it and will usually remain hidden during the day.

They stay near places where numerous bodies are found, such as cemeteries and battlefields. A cemetery has 20% chance each year of being haunted by a ghoul. Unearthed graves and devoured corpses are telltale signs of ghoul activities. The first graves to be opened are often the ones the ghoul knew while alive.

Ghasts are tougher ghouls. The only way to differentiate a ghast from a ghoul is the stench emanating from them. From a distance, a ghast can also be identified as being the "ghoul" commanding other ghouls. Van Richten had an unproven theory that ghasts are actually very old ghouls; however it should be noted that a person killed by a ghast will rise as a ghast, and not as a ghoul.

Lacedons are marine ghouls. They look similar to their earthbound cousins, except for their palmed extremities. They can engulf large amounts of seawater to make them look like floating, bloated corpses, as a trick to surprise their victims. Outside of the water, their smell of dead sea animals is nearly unbearable. They are far more uncommon than ghouls.

## Psychology

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A newly-created ghoul develops a strange mind when it realizes the change happening to it and its new hunger for dead flesh. It quickly loses its sanity and develops a hatred for what it no longer is: living. They like body profanation of *all* kinds.

A ghoul has average intelligence while a ghaſt has ſlightly higher abilities (the MM ſtates an Intelligence of 13, and a Wiſdom ſcore of 14 for both, but I ſuggeſt raising a ghaſt's ſcores if you adopt the theory that ghaſts are older ghouls). Ghouls are uſually individual creatures, unleſs driven by a ghaſt (or a ghoul lord). Uncontrolled ghouls can ſhare the ſame lair but will often fight for food. They can talk, with a low guttural voice, uſing the language they knew in life, but it is uſually to ſhout obſcenities, eſpecially if they are confronted to people they knew before becoming undead. Otherwiſe, they often make grunts and growl ſounds.

## Combat strategies

While ghouls uſe minor ſurpriſe ſtrategies when attacking, ghaſts will uſe more elaborated plans: heavy uſe of ſurpriſe as a group, then individual actions (no group ſtrategies), and ghoulſh acts to horrify. Picture them acting as a pack of beaſts, like wolves, but much more dangerous.

## Improvements

**Option - paralysis ability:** the paralysis touch of a ghoul is its ability to transmit a mental viſion. From their hatred of living things, ghouls make its touched victim "ſee" its own body, dead in a grueſome way. If the victim fails his ſaving throw, he or ſhe is paralyzed from an obſeſſive viſion of his death and can't move. Elves, being long lived, have a reſiſtance to this ability but ghaſts, being long lived themſelves, are able to make the elves "ſee" their death.

**Option – healing from feeding:** ghouls can cure their own wounds by eating dead fleſh. They recover one hit point for every minute ſpent eating, and the heart or brain provides

them 1-4 additional hit points. They recover hit points 1-4 hours after eating.

**Option - partial paralysis:** *Dragon Magazine* once offered an article where the option of partial paralysis was preſented. Inſtead of whole body paralysis, the ghoul's touch paralyzed only the body parts it touched. I think it can be an intereſting option for lower level parties, inſtead of the "all or nothing" rule.

The following location table is an excerpt from that article (roll d6) (*ſource: DM Oct 1987*):

Hit	Location of Paralysis
1-2	Right arm. Spellcaſting with ſomatic components and melee becomes impoſſible (if character uſes weapon in right hand).
3	Random leg. Character muſt check dex on 1d20 each round to ſtay on feet; any dex bonus to AC is loſt.
4-5	Left arm. Spellcaſting with ſomatic components impoſſible; ſhield may not be uſed (if PC is right-handed).
6	Full body. No movement or combat poſſible.

- ◆ **Caſting.** Some ghouls can caſt ſpells, if they could while alive. They do not need a ſpellbook, but their choice of ſpells is limited. Their twisted, insane mind remembers 2-4 ſpells (choose randomly), of firſt or ſecond level. They can caſt each ſpell once per day.
- ◆ **Longer paralysis:** this type of ghoul paralyzes its victim for a longer period (3d6+3 minutes).
- ◆ **Bat wings.** Theſe uncommon ghouls, often reported on the iſlands in the Sea of Sorrows, have developed a ſet of leathery black wings, which they uſe to ſtealthily fall on their victim from the air, at night.
- ◆ **Confuſion:** the babble of theſe ghouls, generated from their insane minds, can

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cause *confusion*, as per the spell, to those listening. Those failing their Will DC 12 rolls are temporarily insane, their minds turned toward destruction (even against their friends) (50% happening), greed (30%) or lust (20%). Good aligned characters get +2 bonus to this roll.

- ◆ **Poison bite:** those uncommon ghouls transfer a debilitating toxin to their victim. If the victims fail their save roll, they die in 1-3 days. They soon arise as ghouls.
- ◆ **Ghost Sound:** ghouls can cast this spell three times per day. It is often used to surprise or to frighten victims.
- ◆ **Desecrate:** once per week, the ghoul can cast a *desecrate* spell covering the cemetery it haunts.
- ◆ **Famine Spirit:** a monstrous creature with aravenous appetite, even for ghouls standards - it can eat up to one hundred humans a day ! This rare creature attracts ghouls and ghouls as followers (*MMII*)

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## Shadows

### Creation

The origin of this undead specie is unknown and lost in time. Perhaps the first shadow was created by necromantic incantations powerful enough to kill a living person and turn it into a shadow. But most shadows are created when a person is killed by one, fully drained of strength.

### The Plane of Shadow

To this day, it is still unexplained as to why the body of a person killed by a shadow is absorbed by the Demiplane of Shadow, while its

restless spirit stays on our plane. The life force and spirit of the victim is drawn to the Plane of Shadow and its former body is completely transferred as well (By the way, I plan a future article on the Plane of Shadow's relation to Ravenloft).

When someone is killed by a shadow undead, it is only a matter of minutes before the shadow rises from the place where the body stood. That person cannot be raised by normal means, unless that body is recovered from that plane, or a powerful spell such as *wish* is used.

Most of his belongings do not transfer to that shadowy state (80% per item to stay on the Prime Material world).

Blessing the body with holy water will prevent the corpse transfer to the plane of shadow but will not prevent the shadow creation.

### Appearance and Biology

Shadows are without substance, incorporeal. They look like monocolored gray images of what they looked in life, but they often appear skeletal, desiccated, and their clothing or armor appear to be partially shred and very ancient. They are soundless and usually eerie floating just above the ground, when they do not fly. Even if they are incorporeal, they can lift small objects, as the minor ghosts known as poltergeists. Van Richten thought that objects weighting more then 20 pounds can't be lifted by a shadow. Shadows can get together to lift heavier objects.

They prefer to stay hidden in shadows or dark corners until they strike. They are nearly (90%) invisible in shadows but that ability fades to nothing in bright light conditions. They hate bright light, of course, as it represents their opposite, and also for the fact they can't hide in it. From those shadowy corners, they sneakily attack from behind, with surprise, and their incorporeal touch, chilling for the living, is often the first thing a person feel in his back when it is

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attacked by a shadow. It is unknown how they see and hear, but they are usually aware of their surroundings in a 50 feet radius per hit dice (150' as a starter), unless a physical object blocks their "senses".

## Psychology

Shadows hate life, and bright light, but they like the company of their kind. Thus, they are often found in packs. Shadows have low Intelligence, so packs have little discipline or sense of planning. Their attack is never planned except for gaining surprise.

It is probable that shadows can't communicate with others of their kind, as no sign of this has ever been reported (As a note, the 3<sup>rd</sup>-ed MM states that newly created shadows are controlled by the shadow that killed them – that wasn't the case in previous D&D editions. Considering the proposed undisciplined state of shadows, I suggest not to use that "control" ability).

The shadow's existence is a miserable one: they never wander far away from the place they were killed, endlessly haunting this area. They are doomed to the existence of a shadow, trapped in their faded memories and unable to communicate. Perhaps they endlessly review their death, or other failure when living. They are poor spirits that one can pity.

However, they are very aggressive toward the living and like to terrify their victim before draining them of all their strength. The only way to communicate with a shadow is with the use of the spell *speak with dead*. They will not attack during the spell, but usually the frustrated spirit won't cooperate with good will.

Shadows do not keep treasure, as objects are painful reminders of their former life. When they kill a victim, they collect all his belongings and hide it in a place out of their view (typically a well, grotto, or similar place).

## Combat Strategies

Silent sneak attack from behind, use of terror if the opponent doesn't seem too tough, always individual actions (no group strategies whatsoever). They often fly in packs, above their victim, to terrify them and to stay out of weapon range.

## Improvements

Most shadows encountered are young ones. However, as many other undead, Van Richten observed that the shadow gains power when it ages. While their intelligence increases with age, their wisdom decrease, as they are getting madder from their isolation, frustration, and hatred of the living.

Those older shadows never command the younger ones, thus the theory that they do not communicate, but the younger ones will usually protect the oldest.

The elder shadows have a better intelligence, and will make plans and strategies to torment and kill intruding visitors. Nothing physically differentiate elder shadows from younger ones.

These changes are presented on the following table:



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Age Category (years)	HD	Int	Wis	Special ability
0-20	3	6	12	--
21-40	4	6	11	Mirror Image (Ex)
41-60	5	7	10	Animate Shadow (Ex)
61-80	6	7	9	Darkness (Ex)
81-100	7	8	9	Chilling Grasp (Su)
100-120	8	8	8	Turn Object to Shadow (Su), +2 or better weapon to hit
121+	9	9	8	Steal Shadow (Su)

*Mirror Image:* as the spell cast by a mage level equal to the shadow's HD (1/day).

*Animate Shadow:* the shadow creates either the illusion that the victim's own shadow is now animated and is attacking the victim, or the illusion of more shadows coming out from a dark corners. It is used to distract opponents from them while they attack (3/day).

*Darkness:* as the spell cast by a mage level equal to the shadow's HD (1/day).

*Chilling Grasp:* in addition to the strength draining attacks, the touch of a shadow causes cold damage (spell stats as *shocking grasp*, as the spell cast by a mage level equal to the shadow's hit dice, but cold damage instead) (2/day).

*Turn Object to Shadow:* the touch of the shadow on an object transfers the object to the Plane of Shadow, if the owner of the object fails a DC 12 Reflex save (subtract a bonus of +1 for

every magical "plus" of the item or +1 for being magical if the item has no "pluses"). That object is forever lost, unless recovered from the dreaded Plane of Shadow. Elder shadows will use this ability to send painful weapons away (but it can't be used on a cleric's religious sign).

*Steal Shadow:* unless a DC 15 Will save is made, the shadow's touch simply removes the shadow of a victim, who's body will not cast any shadow. While some rogues might enjoy this state, there is a curse to it. Each month, an affected person gets a DC 15 Will save to prevent the permanent loss of one point of Strength. When the victim reaches the Strength score of zero, he dies and is turned into a shadow. Vistanis have a (costly) potion to remove this curse.

**Slow shadow:** in DoD, some of the shadow based spells were known to sometimes create "slow" shadows monsters, who attack the caster. The touch of these shadows slows their opponent (DoD, Shadowcat spell note, p 187).

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## Wights

### Creation

All wights were created when they were killed by a member of that dread undead species. A newly created wight is always a half-strength spawn, under the control of its "creator". The control ends when the later wight is killed: the spawn is then free to get full wight powers.

Vistani are sure that brutal, violent and aggressive persons have a good chance of coming back as wights after their death. They back their saying by showing the high number of Falkovnian Talons who are often seen again after they die, as wights (the chance is 10% per



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HD for a person who did and enjoyed many acts of violence during his or her life).

## Appearance and Biology

Wights are pale, dirty and desiccated. They usually wear rags. Their cruel eyes are bloodshot red and their teeth and fangs grows very long and sharp. They do not smell except when one is very close to them (faint scent of putrefaction). In fact, for someone with small experience with undead, a wight could be mistaken at first sight for some kind of vampire. They feed by draining levels from sentient beings, which gives them great pleasure to destroy a living person that way. They do not need to feed to stay "alive" and can stay for long periods without doing so.

Wights hate bright lights (and sunlight) for what it represents, and will avoid it if they can, but they are not ill affected by it.

As newly created ghouls, newly created wight are pale, and might pass as Lost Ones: they growl and attack anyone on sight. The "normal" aspect of a wight is gained after 2-4 weeks.

## Psychology

Wights are of average intelligence. Their mind burns over one single idea: their hatred for the living. Their first motivation is to kill off as many living creatures as they can.

Most of the time, encountered wights are solitary creatures, otherwise they are surrounded by the spawns they create. Spawns are completely under the control of their slayer; it is believed there is a telepathic link between the wight and its spawns (range 500').

## Combat strategies

Very aggressive and savage attacks. A wight sends its spawns first to test foes. Spawns are often sacrificed for the safety of the leading wight.

## Improvements

**Option - former class and abilities:** a person with class and levels killed by a wight is raised as a spawn wight with half of its levels he or she had in life. So spell casting wights are heard of, once in a while. These do need their spellbook, if applicable, and all spells are focused towards destruction. (this option is in contradiction with the 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. MM's wight entry).

- ◆ **Fear:** the eyes of the wight cause fear, as the spell (1/day)
- ◆ **Confusion gaze:** their gaze causes confusion as the spell (one attempt per minute, in addition to other attacks)
- ◆ **Lifeforce transfer:** these wight gain temporary hit dice increase when they drain a level (one hit dice per drained level, stays until next sunrise, maximum 5 HD gained that way).
- ◆ **Blood frenzy:** wight of that subtype have a shark-like frenzy at the sight of spilled blood: they get +2 bonus to hit and damage, and can attack their own kind if all other enemies are killed (20% chance). Their first goal when in frenzy is to savagely tear a victim to pieces, making as much gore as possible. They can even ignore bright lights when in that state (30% chance).
- ◆ **Animal wight.** Van Richten once got a report from an Island of Terror about a group of wights that had a pet wolf as a guardian, but the animal was a wight too! (RL – W. Alexander).
- ◆ **Dread Wight:** even if they are true undead, the Dread Wight is deceiving, as its appearance is not of an undead and thus can pass as living human ... (DeoD)
- ◆ **Greater Wight** are created when large humanoids (ogres, trolls, etc.) are killed by a wight. They are much stronger and tougher (DeoD).

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- ◆ **Vilewight** are powerful undead sometimes created when someone involved with black arts dies. Its intestines are now snake like and give disease when they bite (BoVD).

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## Wraiths

### Creation

One could easily put the ghosts and the wraiths in the same ensemble, as insubstantial spirits, but there are major differences between these two undead species. While ghosts are created from strong emotions often tied to their death, wraiths are created when an evil and powerful man dies. Indeed, the restless spirit of these persons enjoyed great power over their kin and did so with a maliciousness and evilness that often stays when the body dies. When such a person dies in Ravenloft, the chance of such occurrence is 15% per hit dice/level of the person (maximum 75%). Since that occurrence is by chance uncommon, wraiths are the rarest of the "lower" undeads.

Most of the ghosts in Van Richten's repertoire are restless spirits anchored to a task, typically an unfinished task while they were alive, and/or an emotional state like revenge, undying love, desire for justice, etc., a situation or an object. Wraiths have no similar "grand scheme" and, like wights, are created with a sole idea in their twisted mind: a deep hatred for life.

From their previous ruler-of-men powers when alive, wraiths desire to drain, kill, and enslave as much humanity as it can, as controlled *wight* spawns. That "spawn" ability is never found in ghosts. A person killed by a wraith returns back as a wight in 1-4 rounds.

Ghosts usually haunt all sorts of places, while wraiths are most usually found in tombs (mostly their own), catacombs and similar places

related to death. Last, Ghosts are created with a magnitude range, but wraith have no similar range when created.

### Appearance and Biology

A wraith is a terrifying sight: a floating black or grey cloud-like spirit, shaped vaguely in human form, with two red points of light for eyes. Some uncommon wraiths have a slightly different image: they are more precise in shape and seem to be wearing armor, clothing or shrouds shredded by the passage of time, etc.

Wraiths are absolutely incorporeal. They can't lift objects, but this characteristic give them an important advantage over the living: they ignore armor when attacking (except magical bonuses). As most ghost and specters, they can pass through walls. They are not killed by sunlight but are powerless in it. Their only possibility is to flee to a dark corner to avoid that hated powerless state.

Draining constitution doesn't provide nourishment to a wraith, but still they do it out of pure evilness, for the pleasure of making the living suffer.

**Level Draining option:** It should be noted that, in previous D&D editions, wraith were draining levels instead of constitution points. Perhaps that option could be used by a DM for a very rare and powerful wraith.

### Psychology

While shadows spend their eternity remembering their death, wraiths are very angry and very intelligent, if one can observe their battle tactics. However, most past attempts to communicate with a wraith have failed, even with a *Speak with Dead* spell. It is only in front of a powerful looking foe that it will agree to communicate, with reluctance.

Their transformation into undead instilled in them one major idea: they hate the living. They also bear a sense of superiority over them and try to kill and enslave as spawns as

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much humans as it can, in order to get power over them.

A person killed by a wraith is a half-strength *wight* under the control of its master. The control is complete, and such spawns are often seen as expendable in order to protect the master. Since wraiths do not speak, the control on its minions is telepathic-like, with a range of 1,000 feet.

**Spawn option:** In 2nd edition, a person killed by a wraith was raised as half-strength wraith spawn (suggestion: 2-3 HD, in 1-4 rounds). A DM could allow some wraiths to even have the power to create both types of spawns, to their choice (wight or half-strength wraith). Since wraith are often difficult to distinguish apart, that half-strength wraith spawn could be used as a decoy.

## Combat strategies

A wraith always sends its spawns first to test the foes. Spawns are often sacrificed for the safety of the leading wraith. Wraiths always try to attack the weakest member of a party first, in order to increase the number of its spawns against the remaining foes. Wight spawns weaken the foe first, or corner it, and the wraiths jump in for the kill soon after with its constitution draining ability.

Wraiths are powerless under sunlight but they usually use their insubstantiability to plunge into the ground to avoid the sun's effect.

## Improvements

Most variations observed on wraiths are magical abilities.

- ◆ **Symbol spell casting.** Older wraiths have been known to cast *symbol of despair*, once per day.
- ◆ **Improved armor.** Some deadly wraiths gain a permanent bonus of 1 point in armor class for every person killed, up to the

extreme point of being unharmed by any nonmagical weapon.

- ◆ **Snow Wraith.** The *arayashka* is also called the "snow wraith," found mainly in the Frozen Reaches. These dreaded wraith drain heat and leave their victims completely frozen (DoD).
- ◆ **Dexterity drain.** In Vorostokov also, cold wraiths are similar to *arayashka*, but these horrors drain Dexterity points (1-6 per touch), in addition to cold damage (1-4 points) (RL - Dylan Brooks).
- ◆ **Cloud of enfeeblement.** Wraiths have been seen to create clouds of chilling vapors around them (10' radius). This sickly gray vapor has two effects: first it can hide the wraith from sight (but not from the sun's effect), and secondly, all that enters it to attack the wraith should make a Fortitude save (DC 15) for each minute in it, or loose 1-6 points of Constitution. These Constitution points are not lost forever, and are regained at the rate of 1 point per ten minutes.
- ◆ **Shadow animation.** Van Richten once encountered a wraith that was able to animate the shadow of its foe, to attack them (as a *shadow conjuration* spell).
- ◆ **Darkness spell.** Being entities of darkness, some wraiths are able to cast *darkness* spells, up to 3 times per day.
- ◆ **Suggestion spell.** Other wraiths have been known to cast *suggestion* spells to confuse foes.
- ◆ **Wall of Ice.** One very old wraith was able to cast a semi-hemispheric wall of ice. It casted this to isolate one victim from the rest of its party, in order to attack it more easily.
- ◆ **Animate Dead.** Other wraiths have been known to animate skeletons and zombies, as per the *animate dead* spell (once per week).

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- ◆ **War wraiths** are dreaded horrors found exclusively on battlefields. Their whispers are said to be immensely terrifying ! (*Book of Souls*: "War Wraith," by J.W. Mangrum).

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## Sources:

**BoS**: The wonderful Book of S\_ series of netbooks (from the official Ravenloft website: [www.kargatane.com](http://www.kargatane.com))

**BoVD**: Book of Vile Darkness. This 3<sup>rd</sup> edition book has many evil spells for necromancers and evil priests.

**CoD**: Champion of Darkness Ravenloft accessory book (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.)

**CNH**: Complete Necromancers Handbook (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) (TSR # 2151)

**DoD**: Domain of Dread (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) (TSR # 2174)

**DM**: Article from Dragon Magazine (with month / year of issue)

**DeoD**: the first Ravenloft monster book in 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, Denizens of Darkness (WW 15002)

**FRA**: Forgotten Realms Adventure book (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) (TSR # 2106)

**Gaz1**: The first Ravenloft Gazeteer (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.)

**LR**: Lonesome Road site (Kargatane's A. Wyatt's) (at: [www.geocities.com/Area51/Dungeon/6102/index.html](http://www.geocities.com/Area51/Dungeon/6102/index.html))

**MM**: Monster Manual (3<sup>rd</sup> edition)

**MMII**: Monster Manual II (3<sup>rd</sup> edition)

**RL**: Ravenloft mailing list (followed by the name of the contributor)

**VRA**: Van Richten's Arsenal (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) , a very well made Ravenloft accessory (WW # 15010)

Of course, Len Lenofka's netbook "**Guide to the Undead**", and all the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition TSR **Van Richten Guides** have been the starting inspirations of this long Ravenloft article, that I started about a year and a half ago.

I hope you enjoyed it.



# Things that bump in the night...

Mythica Nephos

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## ALL THINGS SMALL AND HELPFUL... FEYS FOR COLD DOMAINS

By: John Kristian Spangberg (The Stoic)

Fey and undead from the  
scandinavian folklore,  
for cold and temperate  
regions.

Though these creatures are meant as an appendix for the Northlands, they may very well be used in other domains, or even a generic setting, for that matter. They are most suited for cold-temperate climates, as they are all based on Scandinavian folklore.

The undead are the remains of people who died in unfavorable conditions, and have come back either to make amends or wreak vengeance upon the living.

The fey in this article is part of a family known as the vette. There are more vette than those mentioned here. Be aware that all of these have an aggressive side, but also a passive/benevolent side. A part of the mystique of these creatures lies within that knowledge.

The vette can bestow a blessing that is connected with the particular branch of vette. The blessing lasts for 3d4 weeks, and is normally a bonus to a specific skill. This bonus applies even if the character is untrained in that skill. Each vette has a special favorite food which has a greater chance of getting a friendly reaction.

### Draug

**Medium Undead (Aquatic)**

Hit Dice: 5d12 (32 HP)

Initiative: +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 30 ft., swim 40 ft.

AC: 15 (+1 Dex, +4 Natural)

Attacks: 2 slams +4

Damage: 2 slams 1d4+4

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Howling (Su)

Special Qualities: Undead, Turn Resistance +2, Allergen (Ex)

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +6

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 12, Con -, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 16

Skills: Hide +7\*, Intimidate +9, Listen +10, Move Silently +7, Search +8, Spot +8, Profession (Sailor or Fisher) +10

Feats: Alertness, Improved Initiative, Power Attack

Climate/Terrain: Aquatic (coast, rivers)

Organization: Solitary (1)

Challenge Rating: 5

Treasure: None

Alignment: Usually Chaotic Evil

Advancement: 7-9 HD (Medium)

The sea is a cruel mistress. The draug (drohg), or doomed fisherman, is atestament to that. The draug is the remains of a fisherman lost at sea in a storm. Angry as the stormy sea in which they met their fate, draugs come back to terrorize the living. They are often used as a warning in tales told by oldfishermen and seadogs, as the draug is viewed as a bad omen.

A draug looks like a fisherman with seaweed covering his face and upper body. His flesh has been bloated by the brackish water and constantly reeks of it. The draug use a boat for travel. This boat looks like a normal boat, except for one detail: only a half of the boat remains. Seeing this is seen as a bad omen. The draug speak the languages it knew in life.



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## Combat

Seeing the boat of the draug usually means meeting the draug face to face, but that cannot be taken for granted. The draug often hides itself in the seaweed, and may use ambush tactics. The draug may sometimes attack cabins and shanties.

On other times, the draug may even decide to be helpful, saving people lost at sea.

**Howling (Su):** Draugs can emit an enormous howl that can be heard for miles around. This will affect all who can hear it within a 100 foot radius of the draug. Each time the draug howls, a different effect is produced. The first effect is equivalent to the spell emotion (fear), the second to silence, (which does not effect the draug's howl), the third to emotion (despair) and the fourth to hold person. Rarely are all of these used at once, as the draug can only use takes five rounds until the next starts. If someone mocks the howling or attacks the draug, the draug may howl again on the next round. The different effects of the howl stack, where applicable.

**Allergen (Ex):** In addition to other ways of holding undead at bay, draugs have an unusual weakness: human feces. Anyone can use this as a symbol that automatically turns the draug. This can also be accomplished by throwing it at the draug. The draug can't be destroyed by the use of this weakness. The reason for this weakness is unknown, but some fishermen are aware of this.

**Undead:** Immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects and mind-influencing effects. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, ability drain or energy drain.

**Skills:** When hiding in brackish water, the draug receives a +6 circumstance bonus to all Hide checks.

## Deildegast (boundary ghost)

**Medium undead**

Hit Dice: 2d12 (13 hp)

Initiative: +2 (+2 Dex.)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 12 (+2 Dex.)

Attacks: 2 slams +1 or rock +2

Damage: 2 slams 1d4+1 or rock 1d6+2

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Rock throwing (Ex)

Special Qualities: Undead, impossible task (Ex)

Saves: Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +4

Abilities: Str 13, Dex 15, Con -, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 11

Skills: Climb +7, Hide +8, Jump +7, Listen +7, Move Silently +8

Feats: Power attack

Climate/Terrain: Farmland

Organization: Solitary (1)

Challenge Rating: 2

Treasure: None

Alignment: Usually Neutral Evil

Advancement: 3-4 HD (Medium) or see below

In areas where most farmers are tenant farmers, those who own their own land praise the gods for enabling them to do so. One of the gravest crimes to commit in such a society is to move boundary stones. The effects of the crime would last long after the perpetrator was dead, as well as the farmer that had been wronged. A small movement could mean a great difference. There is many a farmer who is tempted to move his boundary stones, but he is always remembered that if it could be proven that he had done such a thing, he will face a social stigma in life, and rise as a deildegast after death. Deildegasts look as emaciated, wild-eyed men that carry stones in their hands, trying to make amends for what they did. Alas, they are doomed to failure.

Deildegasts can speak the languages they knew in life.

## Combat

Deildegasts usually toil about their task, but if provoked or hindered, they will fight back. If convinced that those who confront them mean no harm, they will stop fighting and show them what to do.

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**Rock throwing (Ex):** Boundary ghosts can throw the stones that they carry, hurling them up to 30 ft. The stones do 1D6 damage each, and magically reappear (as a free action) in the hand of the deildegast afterwards.

**Impossible task (Ex):** How much it tries, the deildegast can't move the boundaries back to where they once were, but a living person might. To do so, a person needs to ask if the deildegast needs any help. Normally, a full night's work is required to readjust the boundary stones.

**Undead:** Immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects and mind-influencing effects. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, ability drain or energy drain.

## Variant

There are some deildegasts who didn't move normal boundary stones. Some are former seiðmen(sorcerers) who moved leyline stones. Their peers discovered them and cursed them for disrupting the energy field of the earth. These leyline ghosts appear as a normal deildegast carrying coal and shrouded in flames. They have the spellcasting powers of a 3rd to 5th level sorcerer. They do not throw rocks, and have fire resistance 10.

## Oskorei (Incorporeal)

### Colossal Undead

Hit Dice: 6d12 (42 HP)

Initiative: +0

Speed: fly 40 ft. perfect

AC: +4 (-8 size, +12 deflection)

Attacks: Incorporeal grab +3

Damage: -

Face/Reach: 60 ft. by 60 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Frightful presence(Ex), Snatch (Ex)

Special Qualities: Undead, Allergen (Ex), Incorporeal (Ex)

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +5

Abilities: Str -, Dex 10, Con -, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 16

Skills: Intimidate +13, Search +10, Spot +10

Feats: Toughness

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organization: Unique (1)

Challenge Rating: 6

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always Chaotic Evil

Advancement: None

The Oskorei (OSS-koh-ray), or Misery Train, is a gang of spirits that ride across the land in search of unrest and battle. They are doomed to their existence because their actions add up equally good and evil. Not being good enough to deserve a good afterlife, but not being wicked enough to be punished, they are forced to haunt the living. Former brawlers, drunkards, cheaters, and frauds are its most common components. They ride from house to house during festival days, looking for alcohol and a good fight.. They cannot join in the fight any longer, but cheer louder the more violent the fight gets. If the brawl ends with someone dying, the procession is even more pleased.

The Oskorei looks different depending on which side the beholder sees it. From the front, it looks like the riders did in—like a shabby band of vagabonds on black horses—and is not particularly frightening. From the sides and back, it is evident that the procession is not made out of living persons. They look like skeletons dressed in black, carrying iron bars they jostle their horses with and banging the bars against each other. The horses can ride across water, and even let their hooves leave the ground.

## Combat

The Misery Train is more likely to watch a fight than actually participating. Fighting the Oskorei is difficult, as it is very quick. Its favorite tactic is simply to snatch away their assailants, then dropping them or abducting them.

Abducted people are, if found, all on their own, cold and confused, not remembering anything. Those who aren't found have been made part of the procession, but can still be

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saved if a person tries to drag his friend out of the Misery Train. This provokes an attack of opportunity.

**Allergen (Ex):** For some reason, the Misery Train cannot travel over cultivated ground, like a field.

**Amnesia (Ex):** A creature that has been carried off by the Oskorei suffers from amnesia from the time it was grappled by the Oskorei and carried away.

**Frightful presence (Ex):** When banging their iron rods together, the members of the Oskorei forces mortals to become frightened unless rolling a successful Will save at DC 16. The effects last for 5d6 rounds.

**Snatch (Ex):** If a successful attack roll is made against a creature medium-size or smaller, the Oskorei may attempt to start a grapple as though it had the improved grab special attack. It may then drop it as a free action. The creature suffers falling damage.

**Incorporeal:** Can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, +1 or better magic weapons, or magic, with a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source. Can pass through solid objects at will, and own attacks pass through armor. Always moves silently.

**Undead:** Immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects and mind-influencing effects. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, ability drain or energy drain.

## Fossegrim (vette)

### Small fey

Hit Dice: 2d6 (6 hp)

Initiative: +8 (+4 Dex., +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 30 ft., swim 40 ft.

AC: 15 (+1 size, +4 Dex.)

Attacks: Dagger+1

Damage: Dagger 1d4-1

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Master fiddler (Su)

Special Qualities: SR 15, Bardic abilities (Su), Blessing of the vette (Ex), Invisibility (Su)

Saves: Fort +0, Ref +7, Will +6

Abilities: Str 8, Dex 18, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 16

Skills: Bluff +9, Disguise +7, Hide +12, Listen +9, Move Silently +8, Search +6, Sense Motive +7, Spot +9, Perform (fiddle) +13

Feats: Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse (Dagger)

Climate/Terrain: Aquatic (waterfalls, ponds)

Organization: Solitary (1), Family (2-4)

Challenge Rating: 2

Treasure: Normal

Alignment: Usually Neutral

Advancement: 3-5 HD (small-size)

In majestic waterfalls, a small race of fey known as fossegrim live. Normally shy and elusive, they sometimes show themselves to a person who has made an offering on a special occasion, such as a leg of a lamb. They are often sought out in this fashion, as the fossegrim is known as a master fiddler. They are picky about their pupils, as they often have to go through a number of meaningless tasks in order to gain their mentor's favor. Fossegrims look like small, spry old men with long beards.

## Combat

The fossegrim isn't much of a fighter, preferring to stay out of the business of humans. When pressed to fight, the fossegrim uses his musical abilities to incapacitate the enemy. A few fossegrim attack humans on sight, due to their careless use of the rivers and waterfalls, and may try to drive them away from their homes.

**Bardic abilities (Su):** A fossegrim may use countersong, fascinate and inspire competence as a bard.

**Blessing of the vette (Su):** The fossegrim's version of this blessing is of course the ability to bestow knowledge regarding the fiddle. The recipient gains a +6 competence bonus on all perform (fiddle) checks for 3d4 weeks.

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**Invisibility (Su):** The fossegrim can become invisible at will, as a standard action, and can remain invisible indefinitely.

**Master fiddler (Sp):** The fossegrim may use his fiddle to create the following spell-like effects, each usable once per round, at will: cause fear, charm person, entangle and sleep. He may also use Otto's irresistible dance 1/day. The DC to any of these is 15.

## Kvernknurr (vette)

### Small fey

Hit Dice: 2d6 (6 hp)

Initiative: +7 (+3 Dex., +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 30 ft

AC: 14 (+1 size, +3 Dex.)

Attacks: Light mace+1

Damage: Light mace 1d6-1

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Guardian of the mill (Sp), Respected fiddler (Sp), Swallow whole (Ex)

Special Qualities: SR 14, Blessing of the vette (Ex), Invisibility (Su), Lowlight vision

Saves: Fort +0, Ref +6, Will +7

Abilities: Str 8, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 14

Skills: Bluff +6, Hide +11, Listen +8, Move Silently +7, Search +6, Sense Motive +7, Spot +8, Perform (fiddle) +8, Profession (miller) +13

Feats: Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (Light mace)

Climate/Terrain: Rural (mills)

Organization: Solitary (1) or pair (2)

Challenge Rating: 2

Treasure: Normal

Alignment: Usually Chaotic Neutral

Advancement: 3-5 HD (small-size), 6-7 HD (medium-size)

When mills were introduced, many people were amazed at the efficiency of the contraption. However, some were scared of the grinding noise, attributing this to magic or creatures living in the mill. The kvernknurr (QUERN-knur), or mill snarl, is the embodiment of the latter.

A distant relative to the fossegrim, the mill snarls are even more elusive and mischievous. The mill snarl is rarely seen, preferring to stay in the shadowy places inside the mill. They sometimes help the millers, and sometimes hinder them. Beer and small pancakes of rolled dough is the mill snarl's favorite food. If feeling helpful, add the mill snarl's adjustment to the check as if combining skill attempts (page 62 of the Player's Handbook.)

## Combat

Surprisingly, the mill snarls tend to fight more often than the fossegrim. When doing so, they don't always use their invisibility.

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

**Blessing of the vette (Su):** Although not as talented as the fossegrim, mill snarl also play the fiddle. The may grant a +4 competence bonus on any perform (fiddle) checks required of the recipient. When it comes to working at the mill, the mill snarl shines. Mill snarls may bestow a +6 competence bonus in profession (miller) on the recipient.

**Guardian of the mill (Sp):** Sometimes, the mill snarl decides to scare away people entering the mill by using dancing lights, ghost sound and light at will.

**Invisibility (Su):** The mill snarl can become invisible at will, as a standard action, and can remain invisible indefinitely.

**Respected fiddler (Sp):** The mill snarl can perform spell-like abilities with his fiddle, though not as well as his distant cousin. Mill snarls may create effects equivalent to cause fear and sleep 3/day.

**Swallow whole (Ex):** Oddly enough, mill snarls have enormous mouths compared to other fey. This is not evident at first, but their mouths, when fully open, are as big as a doorway.

## Tunkall (vette)

### Small fey

Hit Dice: 2d6+2 (8 hp)

Initiative: +8 (+4 Dex., +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 15 (+1 size, +4 Dex.)

Attacks: Dagger +4

Damage: Dagger 1d4+3

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Guardian of the homestead (Sp)

Special Qualities: SR 15, Animal friend (Ex),

Blessing of the vette (Ex), Invisibility (Su),

Low-light vision

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +7, Will +6

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 18, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 16

Skills: Bluff +9, Disguise +7, Hide +12, Listen +9, Move Silently +8, Search +6, Sense Motive +7, Spot +9, Profession (Farmer) +13

Feats: Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse (Dagger)

Climate/Terrain: Rural (farms)

Organization: Solitary (1)

Challenge Rating: 2

Treasure: Normal

Alignment: Usually Neutral

Advancement: 3-5 HD (small-size)

The home and the hearth is the cornerstone of every society. The tunkall (TOON-kall) , or yard fellow, is one of its most important residents, although rarely seen, as he does his work at night. He lives in a tree, a hill or underneath a stone on the farm. Not every farm is lucky enough to have a yard fellow, and the tunkall makes sure the residents are aware of this. If they brag about their little helper, shirk their own duties or hinder the tunkall in any way, he might grow angry and get even. Worse, he might leave, undoing everything he has ever done. As most yard fellows lived on the farm before any of the current human residents, the farm may literally fall to pieces. If the yard fellow receives a bit a food for his kindness, and the animals are treated just as well, he will stay. It is customary to give the tunkall a bowl of porridge with a lump of butter on one of the darkest days of the year.

Some believe the tunkall is a manifestation of their ancestors, which explains why the yard fellow lives in a hill (burial mound), and why the farm falls apart when he leaves. Some also leave one of the pens in the barn vacant, so that the yard fellow may put his own (invisible) livestock there. If anything vanishes from the farm, such as a tool, a pile of hay, or a smoked ham from the storehouse, it is sure to be the yard fellow's doing.

The tunkall is strong, and is considered medium-size when it comes to lifting and carrying. The tunkall looks like a jolly little man with a long beard, clad in traditional gray farmer's clothes with a red cap on his head.

## Combat

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

The tunkall lack the musical prowess of his cousins of the wild, but is considerably stronger. In spite of this, he has a few magic tricks of his own that he prefers using.

**Animal friend (Ex):** No animal will ever harm a yard fellow, and he won't hurt them. Dogs won't bark, and even wild animals are aware that the tunkall means no harm.

**Blessing of the vette (Su):** The tunkall's version of this blessing is the ability to bestow enhanced abilities regarding work on a farm. The recipient gains a +6 competence bonus on all Profession (Farmer) checks for 3d4 weeks. This bonus is also used on Animal Empathy and Handle Animal checks, but it only applies to domestic animals normally found on a farm.

**Guardian of the homestead (Sp):** The tunkall, like the kvernknurr, is a fierce guardian. He may use dancing lights, ghost sound and light at will. He may also use animate object, calm animals and repel vermin as a 10th level spellcaster 1/day, although the latter never injures the vermin.

**Invisibility (Su):** The tunkall can become invisible at will, as a standard action, and can remain invisible indefinitely.

## Variants

The klabautermann (kla-BAUW-turr-man), or ship fellow, repairs and supervises his ship. He is dressed in sailor's clothes, but like his relative, he wears a red cap. Substitute his Profession (Farmer) to Profession (Sailor), and his blessing also applies to Balance and Intuit Direction checks while on a ship. He is fond of fish, and lives in a secret compartment on the boat.

Sylvmora (SYL-mo-raw), or silver mother, is a vette that lives in caves. She appears as a small female, similar to a halfling. Silver mothers are very protective of their ore (not just silver, despite the name), but sometimes help and protect miners, as long as they're not too greedy. Substitute her Profession (Farmer) to Profession (Miner). The silver mother's blessing applies to Profession (Miner) checks, as well as Climb and Spot checks while underground. They are very fond of items made by metal.





# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## FACE THIEF WHEN AN EVIL HEART DIES

By: Stanton Fink  
(Atma Weapon)

"That O-jochu turned around, and dropped her sleeve and stroked her face with her hand; and the man saw that she had no eyes or nose or mouth, and he screamed and ran away." ("Mujina", Lafcadio Hearn)

### Medium-Size Undead (Incorporeal)

Hit Dice: 5d12 (hp 32)

Initiative: +2 (+2 Dex)

Speed: Fly 30ft. (perfect)

AC: 18 (-2 size, +2 Dex, +6 natural, +2 deflection)

Attacks: Incorporeal touch +4 melee

Damage: Incorporeal touch 1d6 permanent Charisma drain

Special Attacks: Charisma drain, create spawn, charm person

Special Defenses: Change self

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +5

Abilities: Str -, Dex 15, Con -, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Skills: Bluff +7, Diplomacy +10, Disguise +14, Hide +10, Intimidate +10, Listen +10, Spot +10.

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Solitary, gang (2-3 plus 3-4 faceless) or band (5-8 plus 10-15 faceless)

Challenge Rating: 5

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always lawful evil

Advancement: 6-10 HD (Medium-size).

created when a person with a broken face and an evil heart dies. Its real appearance is that of a floating, incorporeal mass of swirling faces and mist, covered by a cloak of brown mist. It is able to shift its main face according to its devious desires. It can also resemble corporeal, cloaked humanoids when using its change self ability, but interaction quickly reveals it is just an illusion cast over its defiled, incorporeal body.

Face-thieves live to profane and have a special hate towards people of great facial beauty. They often target them with more determination, to feed himself with their personal magnetism and add more lost souls to their number of faceless slaves.

### Combat

An eckridgespawn usually choose a victim before it attacks, almost always one with a high Charisma score. It will try to lure people close to it and kill them, turning them into its slaves and stripping them of their faces. It then lures its previously chosen victim using its change self and charm abilities.

He attacks with the help of its faceless slaves, and usually takes advantage of the shock its victims suffer when they see their beloved ones stripped of their facial features trying to kill them.

**Undead:** Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, disease, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

**Incorporeal:** Can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, +1 or better magic weapons, or magic, with a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source. Can pass through solid objects at will, and own attacks pass through armor. Always moves silently.

Face-thieves, or eckridgespawn, are vengeful and hateful spirits, who are said to be

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## Special Attacks:

**Charisma Drain (Su):** A creature hit by a face-thief's incorporeal touch attack must immediately succeed at a Will save (DC 14) or suffer 1d6 points of permanent Charisma drain.

**Create Spawn (Su):** Any humanoid slain by a face-thief becomes a faceless in 1d4 rounds. Spawn are under the control of the face-thief that created them and remain enslaved until its death.

**Charm Person (Su):** An eckridgespawn can charm a foe, as long as it is currently disguised as a character to whom the reaction of the target is at least friendly. This is similar to a gaze attack, except that the eckridgespawn must take a standard action, and those merely looking at it are not affected. Anyone the eckridgespawn targets must succeed at a Will save (DC 14) or become charmed, as per the spell charm person cast by a 7th-level sorcerer. The ability has a range of 30 feet.

## Special Defenses:

**Change Self (Su):** This ability works as per the spell with the same name, but the face-thief must assume a small or medium-size humanoid form, always completely covered by a brown cloak with a hood, with the exception of its face. A face-thief can only assume forms with faces of foes it killed and turned into faceless.

**Skills:** A face-thief gains a +4 racial bonus to Disguise checks. When using its change self ability, it gains an additional +10 bonus (not included in the stats above).

In the Land of Mists



Although eckridgespawn are not common undead, there are some scattered throughout the land of Mists. Many big cities of Ravenloft, such as Port-a-Lucine, Pont-a-Museau or Lekar, have tales about face-stealing murders.

In Staunton Bluffs, local legend speaks of how a hideous bandit, False-Faced Eckridge, returns from beyond the grave during a spring thunderstorm to steal a victim's face.

## The Faceless

The faceless are the unfortunate souls that have been enslaved by the dread eckridgespawn. They look like grey-fleshed, zombie-like creatures. Their other features remain as when they were living, but they have no faces. Instead, there is only a plain area of grey skin.

Even if the deceased did not have claws, their nails grow into dark, pointy claws.

## Creating a Faceless

"Faceless" is a template that can be added to any humanoid (referred to hereafter as the "base creature"). The creature's type changes to Undead. It retains most type modifiers (such as Fire or Aquatic), but loses alignment type modifiers (such as Good) and type modifiers that indicate kind (such as Goblinoid or Reptilian). It uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

**Hit Dice:** Drop any Hit Dice gained from experience, double the number of Hit Dice left, and raise them to d12.

**Speed:** If the base creature can fly, its maneuverability rating drops to Clumsy.

**AC:** Natural armor increases to a number based on the faceless' size. (Use the base creature's natural armor, if it's higher). See Table 1.

**Table 1: Faceless Armor and Damage**

	Natural Armor	Slam Damage
Diminutive	0	1
Fine	0	1d2
Tiny	+1	1d3
Small	+2	1d4
Medium	+3	1d6
Large	+4	1d8
Huge	+6	2d6
Gargantuan	+11	2d8
Colossal	+16	4d6

**Attacks:** The faceless retains all the natural attacks, manufactured weapons, and weapon proficiencies of the base creature. A faceless also gains a claws attack. Recalculate the faceless' melee and ranged attack bonuses based on its new type (Undead) and abilities (+4 Strength). Undead creatures have a base attack of HD x 1/2 (same as a wizard).

**Damage:** Natural and manufactured weapons deal damage normally. A claws attack deals damage depending on the faceless' size. (Use the base creature's claws damage if it is greater.) For purposes of Strength bonuses to damage, a claws

attack is considered a two-handed attack. See Table 1.

**Special Attacks:** The faceless loses all special attacks.

**Special Qualities:** The faceless loses all special qualities except any subtypes it retains (such as the Fire subtype). The faceless gains the Undead type (see the Introduction of the Monster Manual).

**Saves:** Base saves are Fort +1/3 HD, Ref +1/3 HD, and Will +2+(1/2HD) (same as wizard).

**Abilities:** The faceless' Strength increases by +4. It has no Constitution or Intelligence score, its Wisdom changes to 10, and its Charisma decreases to 1.

**Skills:** The faceless loses all skills.

**Feats:** The faceless loses all feats and gains Toughness.

**Climate/Terrain:** Any land and underground

**Organization:** Any

**Challenge Rating - according to hit dice:**

**Hit Dice / Challenge Rating**

1/2	1/6	8, 10	4
1	1/3	12, 14	5
2	1	16, 18	6
4	2	20	8
6	3		

**Treasure:** None

**Alignment:** Always neutral

**Advancement:** Hit Dice are based on advanced Hit Dice, if applicable.



# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## MORAV

### WHEN GREAT REPTILES ROAMED ON THE EARTH

By: Stanton Fink  
(Atma Weapon)

"...A dragon of bones and mist burst forth from the moat and bit poor Edmund in half! It was as if a nightmare was remembered, and my spells were forgotten for a moment. Half our number were devoured by that thing before we could flee the castle ruins. On foggy nights, I can still hear the beast's roar in the distance..." (Laeraton Shadoweye, elven wizard of Nechuvar Springs)

#### Morav

##### Huge Undead

Hit Dice: 20d12 (hp 130)

Initiative: +2 (+2 Dex)

Speed: Fly 40ft. (perfect)

AC: 18 (-2 size, +2 Dex, +6 natural, +2 deflection)

Attacks: Bite +18 melee

Damage: Bite 5d6+13

Special Attacks: Improved grab, swallow whole, constitution drain, frightful presence

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +14

Abilities: Str 28, Dex 14, Con -, Int 5, Wis 15, Cha 14.

Skills: Listen +17, Spot +18.

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 14

Treasure: None

Alignment: Either lawful or chaotic evil (25% or 75%)

Advancement: 21-30 HD (Huge); 31-60 (Gargantuan).

Moravs are the enslaved spirits of dinosaurs and other great reptiles, created through profane necromantic magic. They are usually under the thrall of evil masters, serving as guardians, while destroying everything they can, in an unending rampage. Moravs emit deep, phantasmagoric roars, while swinging their long tongues of shadowy appearance.

A morav resembles the skeletal remains of a great lizard floating, filled with a shadowy, smoke-like substance. Inside their skulls, through their eye cavities, there is a fearsome, yellow glow that gradually becomes red when the monster enters combat.

#### Combat

Moravs attack irrationally, attempting to destroy every living creature they encounter, unless their master insistently orders otherwise. They always attempt to swallow their foes and drain them into their bellies, attempting to sate their unnatural hunger.

#### Special Attacks:

**Improved Grab (Ex):** To use this ability, the morav must hit with its bite attack. If it gets a hold, it automatically deals bite damage and can try to swallow the opponent.

**Swallow Whole (Ex):** A morav can try to swallow a grabbed opponent of Large or smaller size by making a successful grapple check. Once inside, the opponent is subject to the morav's constitution drain. A swallowed creature can climb out of the gizzard with a successful grapple check. This returns it to the morav's

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

maw, where another successful grapple check is needed to get free. A swallowed creature can also cut its way out by using claws or a small or tiny slashing weapon to deal 25 points of damage to the gizzard (AC 20). Once the creature exits, the hole is closed; another swallowed opponent must again cut its own way out.

The morav's gizzard can hold one large, two Medium-size, four Small, eight Tiny, sixteen Diminutive, or thirty-two Fine or smaller opponents.



**Constitution drain (Su):** Living creatures inside a morav's gizzard must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 22) or suffer 1d4+1 of permanent Constitution drain.

**Frightful Presence (Su):** A morav can unsettle foes with its mere presence. The ability takes effect automatically whenever it attacks, charges or flies overhead. Creatures within a radius of 30ft. are subject to the effects if they have fewer HD than the morav. A potentially affected creature that succeeds at a Will save (DC 22) remains immune to that morav's frightful presence for one day. On a failure, creatures with 4 or fewer HD become panicked for 4d6 rounds and those with 5 or more HD become shaken for 4d6 rounds.

## Creating a Morav

A morav can be with the spell Create Greater Undead, cast over the remains of a dead reptile of at least Huge size by a character of at least 16th level. Since the creature is not automatically under the control of its creator when so created, it is common for it to destroy unprepared masters-to-be and wander wildly, spreading destruction.

## In the Land of Mists

Moravs are very uncommon in the Land of Mists. However, powerful evil spellcasters familiar with this dread creature might search for its main component, the remains of ancestral lizards or dire crocodiles, into the Wildlands or the Amber Wastes. Wild moravs can also be found in the unexplored wastes of these lands.



# Horresco Referens\* (The Dread Art Gallery...)

\* Latin for "I shiver from horror while telling the tale"...



# THE DEMON STILL ROAMS

By: David Crisman (Infamous)

Still feel the fires inside, when he comes in the night  
Making my mind his home  
Dragging me back to that place, where fears on my face  
Praying he'd leave me alone  
Should I take it or tell, I'm trapped in this hell  
I'll take it, save others the pain  
Cause lord knows his wrath, leaves scars on the back  
But these wounds won't be taken in vain  
With intoxicated words, he stutters and slurs  
He strikes, I stumble but stand  
Pride holds back the tears and over the years  
Learned hatred from hands of a man  
Then the dream disappears, I awaken in fear  
Troubled and chilled to the bone  
He paces my mind, Thrashing inside  
It's here that the demon still roams



# A STATUE IN THE COURTYARD

By: David Cicalese (Jasper o' the Nine Lives)

No one was around him when the darkness fell.  
He had faced it many times, he knew his foe quite well.  
A companion through all of this. Together side by side.  
He would be there for him should he run or hide.  
So he picked up his shield and his sword in his right hand.  
And he swore to all the gods, forever he would stand.

He battled against the darkness as bravely as he could.  
But he then heard the voices as he knew he would.  
“Lay down your weapon, my old and dear friend.  
Your night is almost over, your day is at an end.  
We have fought together, for many a great year  
And now dear friend, face what you most fear.”

“I fear not the darkness, “ Said the warrior true  
I fear not dying, nor the likes of you.”  
I fear only one thing, to be a fairytale  
The object of stories, told over wine and ale  
I wish to be remembered, not as a warrior fighting for the light  
But as a simple man, who fought for what he felt was right.”

“Your wish shall be granted, my old and dear friend.  
Your name shall be forgotten, your tale will have an end.”  
And where once stood a warrior, fighting for the light  
Now stands a statue, a defense against the night.  
And on this statue are twelve words, their meaning good and true.  
“Here lies but a simple man. One day he could be you. “

A heroes greatest fear is not from sword nor spell  
Nor the great demons, swarming up from hell  
They need not fear a dragon nor an evil mage  
For a heroes greatest fear is the death that comes with age



## AZALIN'S NEW CROWNS

By: Stanton Fink (Atma Weapon)

Due to recent events, namely the "Grim Harvest" debacle, Azalin is currently without a crown.

Here are some of his horrifically attempts to replace his old crown...

\*\*\*\*\*



“Perhaps this one is a little too scary.”

# The Undead Sea Scrolls



“This one makes me feel like the belle of the ball...”

“If you say so, sir”

“What does Ivana Borca have that I don’t have?”

“Skin, sir. She has skin, you don’t”

# The Undead Sea Scrolls



“I think I like this even better than the original.”



# EXCERPTS FROM THE REGISTER

By: Stanton Fink (Atma Weapon)

My esteemed brethen,

My master, His Majesties Azalin Rex, has commanded me to ask you if he could procure a favor from you. In the year 583, a Darkonian sage, named Alxa, wrote a treatise entitled The Register of Monsters. The Register was then given to His Majesties as a gift, and out of gratitude, Azalin had two copies of it transcribed. During the destruction of Il Aluk, one of the Registers was, sadly, destroyed. Two years ago, thieves had the audacity to enter Castle Avernus and steal one of the remaining Registers. His Majesties desires his book to be returned to him, and has decided that you would be the best avenue to this end.

The Register is bound in brown, scaly leather, and His Majesties' rune is embossed on the front in gold. It is about eight inches wide, eleven inches tall, and one inch thick. The pages are bone-white.

His Majesties has promised a ransom of one thousand crowns for his Register's safe return. He has provided an excerpt of it, and I have taken the liberty to make some notes for you, as well.

His Majesties' Servant,  
S. Fautas



# The Undead Sea Scrolls



Apokryltaros<sup>1</sup>, It Who Once Ruled Us All, sleeps beneath the Land of the Dead, and awaits the time It can be free to rule us once more.

Millenia ago, It Who Must Not Be Invoked sought to destroy the mortal races. They offended It, and It wished to devour them.

The Kings of Heaven were angered by the Devourer's plan, and They cast It out of the Lands of the Living.

Lost, It came to dwell in the Land of the Dead. The ghosts feared It, and made It their emperor.

Through his eternal benevolence, Azalin entered into the Mists and seized the Land of the Dead from Apokryltaros. He struggled with It, and cast It beneath the Land.

With their Emperor gone, the dead returned to their sleep.

It slumbers beneath the Land, but does not rest. It dreams in Its tomb, but is awake. It hungers, IT ALWAYS HUNGERS.

---

<sup>1</sup>Darkonian legend speaks of how Darkon was once a land of the dead... Could it be that Azalin came to Darkon and made it into what it is now after disposing its original ruler? Is this fish-devil Alxa writes of the true genius of Darkon and Necropolis?

## The Undead Sea Scrolls



A weird and horrible creature which lives in a cavern beneath Nevuchar Springs.

Though it appears to be similar to a zombie, King Azalin says that it is not, otherwise it would be his servant. The Pwuazon, as His Majesties has named it, is possessed of horrid humors that have mutagenic properties. These humors are stored within the bloated spores inside its body.

A zombie created when an elven warrior succumbed to the ill affects of Pwuazon's foul touch. Though rot had pulled free all of its muscles from its bones, it could move with startling speed.

By His Majesties' decree, a bounty of 300 crowns has been placed upon the Pwuazon's head.





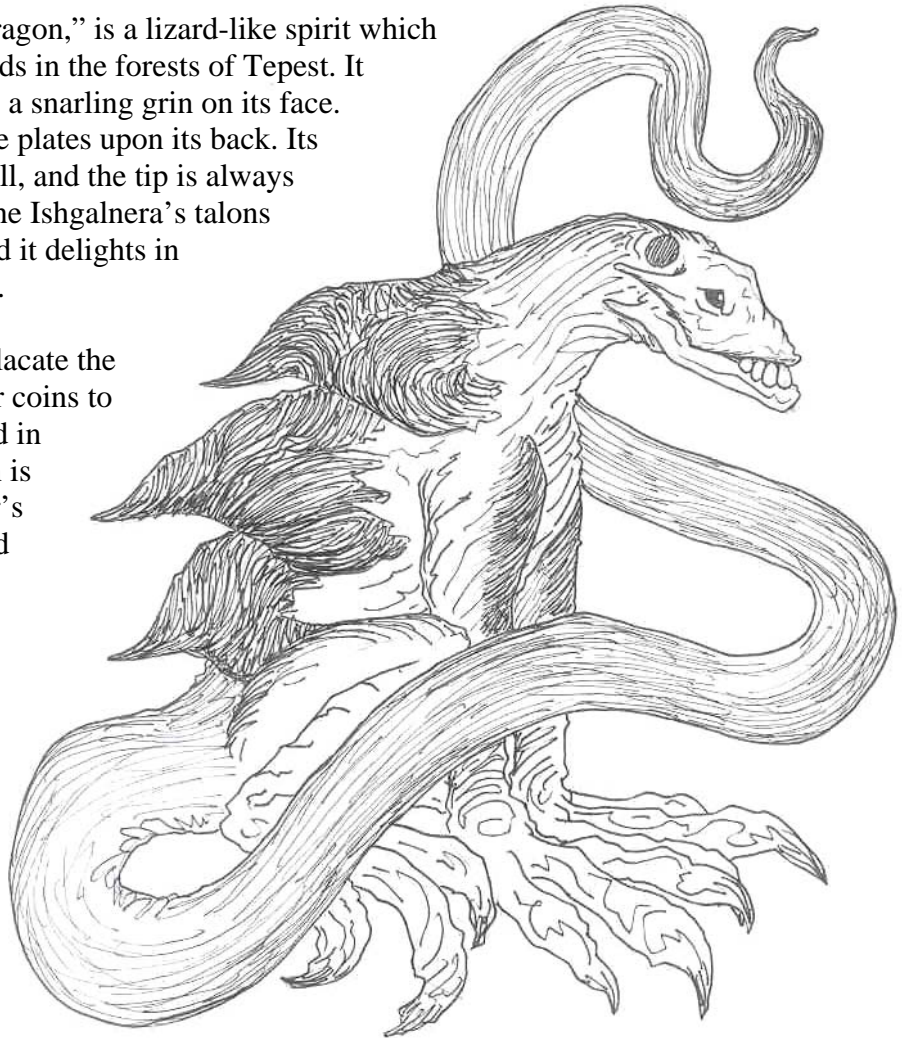
# The Undead Sea Scrolls

The Ishgalnera, or “Pond Dragon,” is a lizard-like spirit which lairs in various stagnant ponds in the forests of Tepest. It is as large as a boar, and has a snarling grin on its face. It has three, green, stone-like plates upon its back. Its tail is longer than a tree is tall, and the tip is always kept plunged in the pond. The Ishgalnera’s talons can rend steel like paper, and it delights in clawing those who irritate it.

The Tepestani often try to placate the pond dragons by tying silver coins to rats, which are then drowned in their pools. If a pond dragon is angered, it can slay a farmer’s wheat fields with its blighted breath, or curse a family so that no pot, cup, or spoon in their possession can hold water. If the Ishgalnera is truly enraged, they will enshroud the object of their fury with a mephitic cloud of foul brown mist.

Hags and Vistani often try to seek the pond dragon’s favor. A hag will drown a victim in the Ishgalnera’s pond. The Vistani prefer a less violent way, however, and offer the pond dragon bowls of fruit. On rare occasions, a hag will attempt to cajole or beg the creature into serving as a steed to carry her to her coven, while Vistani infrequently ask for permission to use its water for use in their sorceries.

The surest way of breaking the Ishgalnera’s hexes<sup>2</sup> is to cast a rod or dagger of lead into its pond. This is an unspeakably dangerous way, as the Ishgalnera, now bereft of a home, will attempt to hunt down and slay the one who ruined it. Hags and Vistani will heap curses on the victim, as well, lest the pond dragon accuses them of being accomplices. In order to truly slay the pond dragon, one must sever its tail from its body, cleave open its head, and smash the precious stone within on a cursed anvil.



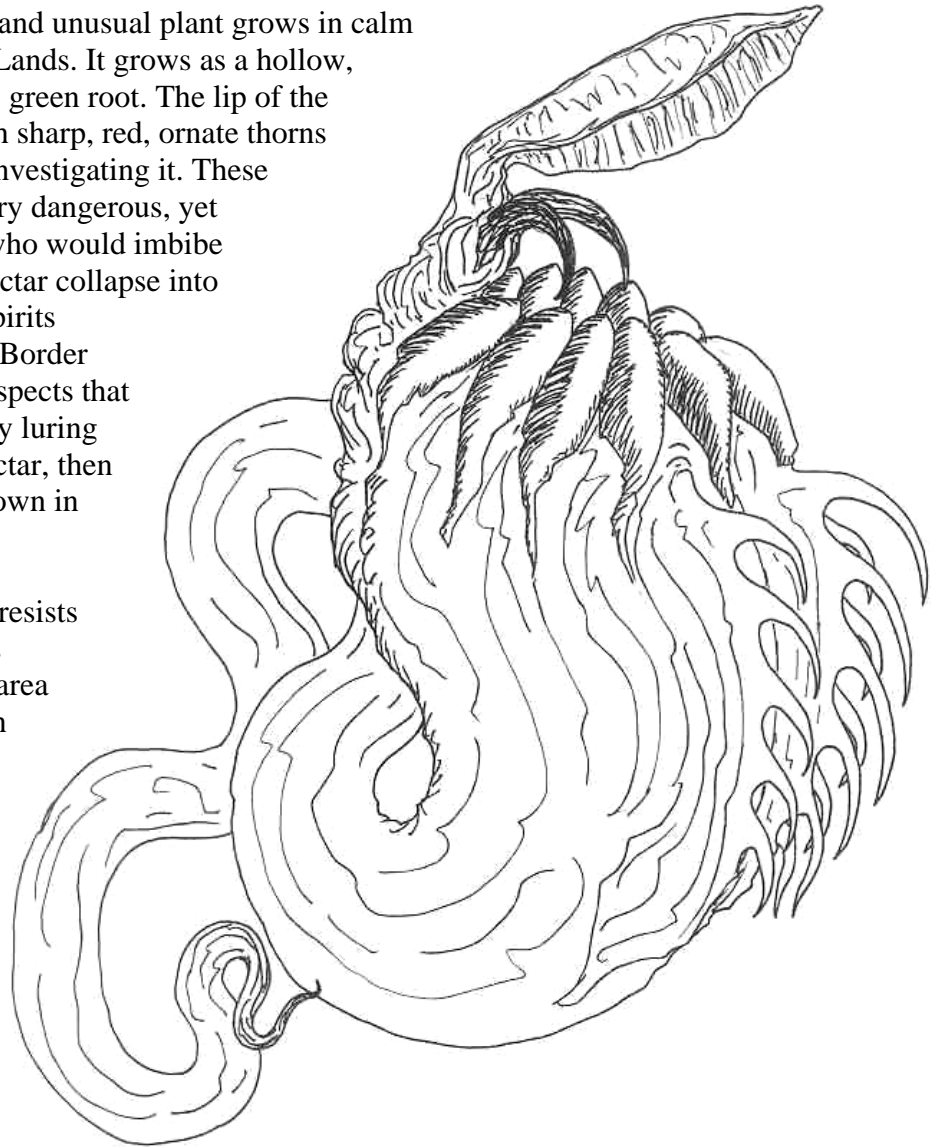
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<sup>2</sup> From my sources, another, much less dangerous way of undoing the pond dragon’s curse is to hire a sympathetic Vistani to flog an afflicted victim before the creature’s pool.

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

The pnepthenes is a rare and unusual plant grows in calm places in the Nightmare Lands. It grows as a hollow, green gourd, with a long, green root. The lip of the opening is decorated with sharp, red, ornate thorns that deter animals from investigating it. These living containers hold very dangerous, yet delicious nectar. Those who would imbibe the pnepthenes' sweet nectar collapse into a stupor, and find their spirits temporarily cast into the Border Ethereal. An herbalist suspects that this sinister plant feeds by luring insects into tasting its nectar, then feeds on them as they drown in the fluid.

The pnepthenes actively resists cultivation. If the plant is grown in an undesirable area (its second most common ailment), it will pull up its root, and crawl away to a more desirable area. His Majesties, King Azalin<sup>3</sup>, found to his sorrow that these plants find well water and even river water to be deadly poisonous, and can only accept rainwater, or bog water. If watered with well or river water, the pnepthenes wilts, and dies within minutes. However, he did find that they do appreciate light shade, and a diet of cockroaches.



---

<sup>3</sup> Very few people have had privy to King Azalin's gardens. Apparently, both Alxa and I are among these privileged few. My otherwise pleasant memories of that odious place were marred by the numerous attempts on my life by His Majesties' climbing roses.

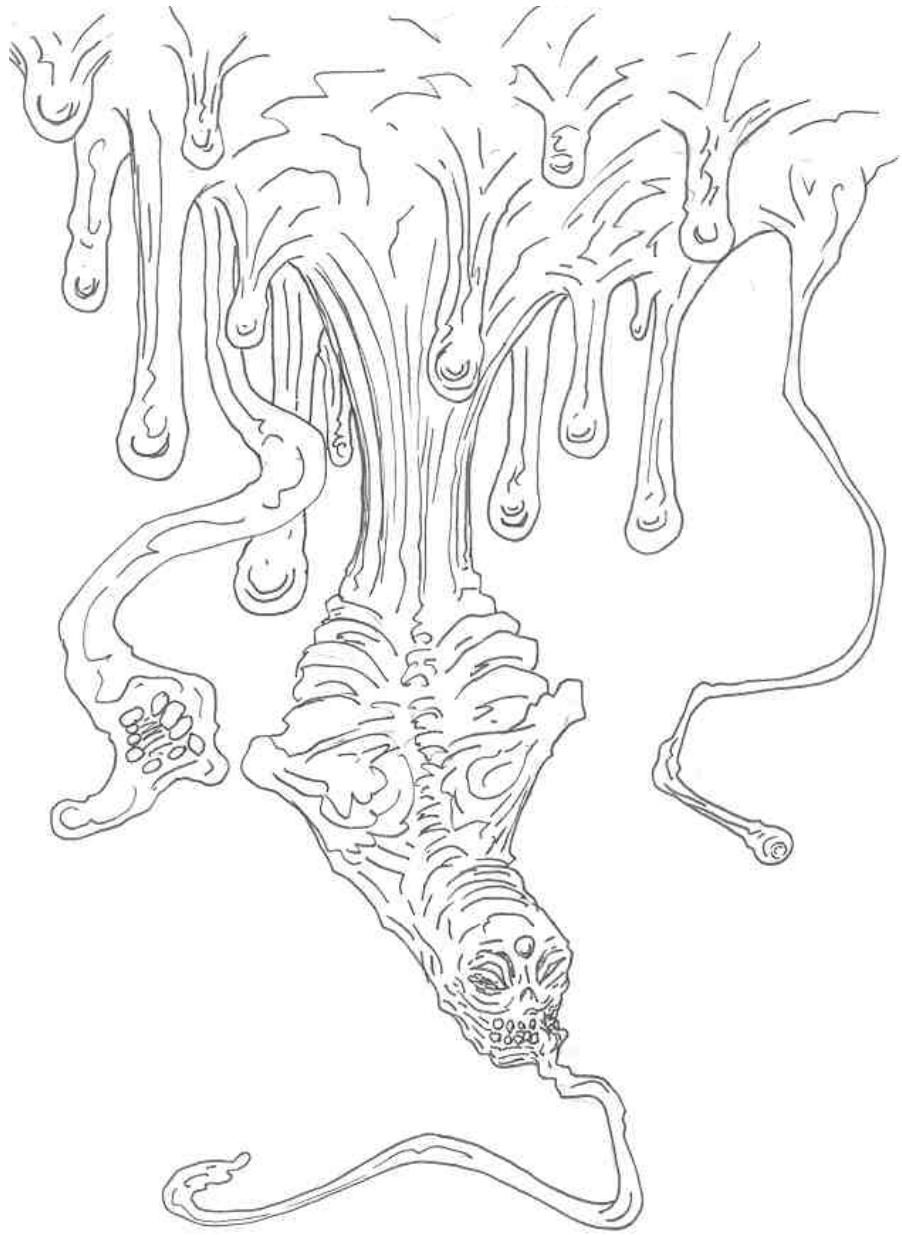
## The Undead Sea Scrolls

A dreadful race of spirit-fish is said to lair within the great depths of the Mirror Lake of the Six Islands of the Sun. These spirits, called “Tenguzame,” come to the lake surface at night, and prey on fishermen. The tenguzame delight in supping upon the souls of their victims. They can not abide the presence of light, and attempt to dowse any they come across. Each spring, the people of the lake shore throw balls of boiled rice and millet into the lake in order to dissuade the spirit fish from taking more lives.



## The Undead Sea Scrolls

A weird and frightening spirit rumored to be the restless ghost of a gossip<sup>4</sup>. This being resides in abandoned houses, and places a burning lamp in the window of its lair, as a lure to ensnare travelers. To further entice its victims, the spirit has been known to even procure food for its “guests.” Such hospitality comes with a price. Once its victims have supped upon its food, and have gone to sleep, it bleeds forth from the Border Ethereal, so it may forcefully examine the memories of its prey. Such unfortunates have been driven to death and madness by the creature’s violation of their minds.



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<sup>4</sup> Reports of this entity sound suspiciously similar to a fable from G’henna called, “The Bad Innkeepers.” Legend had it that a stingy innkeeper and his gossip wife stole food and money from their guests, until Zhakata punished both of them by transforming them into two giant candles. Each year, on the eve of their demise, so said G’hennan mothers, the Mists bring back the couple’s inn, and allow them to have visitors once more.

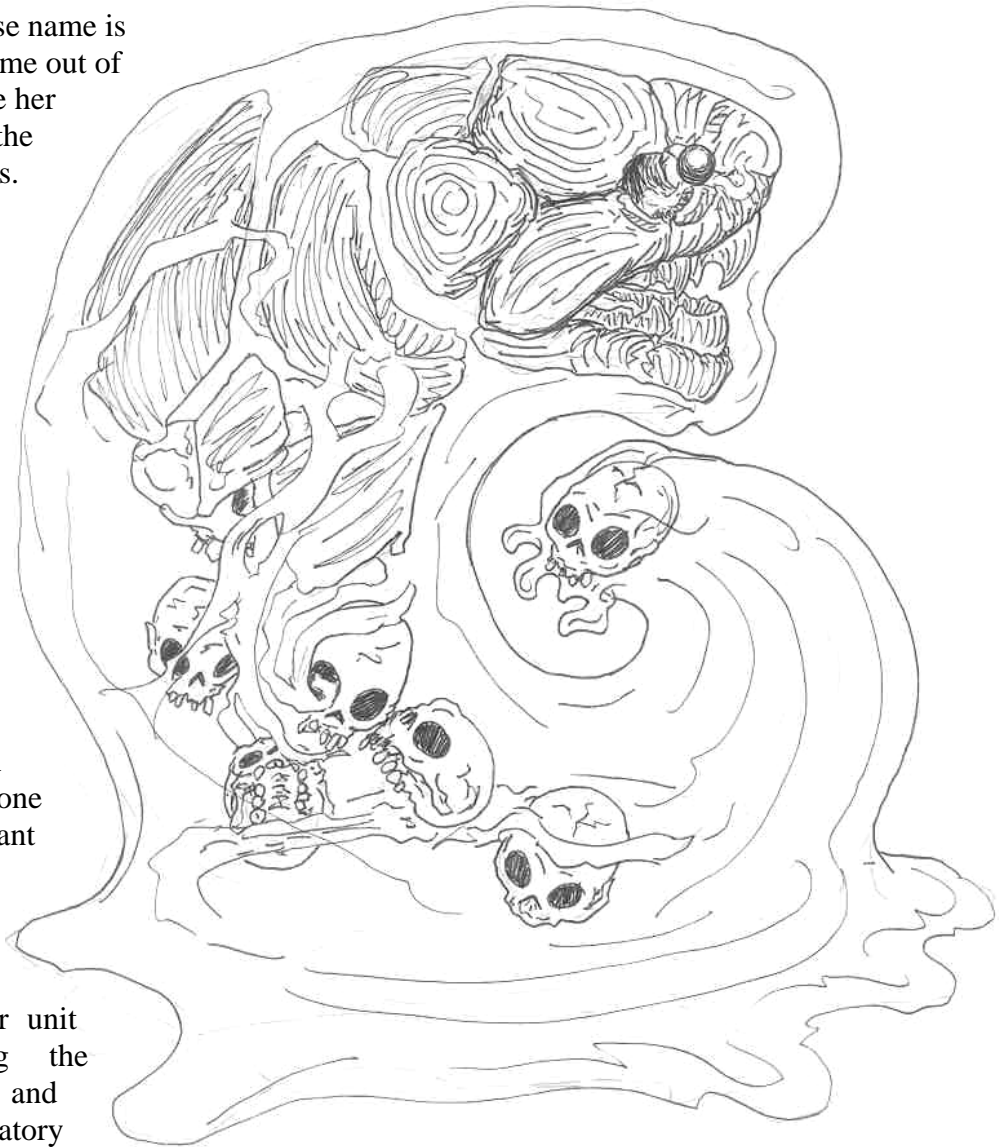


# The Undead Sea Scrolls

In the year 620, a powerful necromancer, whose name is forgotten by all, came out of the Mists and made her lair somewhere in the forests of Kartakass. In order to dispose of failed experiments, disappointing minions, and annoying guests, the necromancer set about creating what she referred to in her notes as a “garbage-eating creature.” This “garbage-disposing unit,” as it was also referred to, would serve as one of her most important minions.

The necromancer set about creating her unit by first buying the carcass of a rare, and dangerous predatory fish in a port of Lamordia. She then acquired several monsters called “gelatinous cubes,” and slew them by infusing them with negative energy, thereby causing the cubes to lose their shapes, and revert into inert slime. The necromancer then poured the slime over the fish-beast corpse, and re-infused the soup with negative energy. Thus, the “Bone Pudding” was born. She kept the monstrosity in a tiny cell that was connected to her lair above by one shaft that led from her laboratory, and another shaft that led from her dining hall.

In the year 653, the necromancer told the bard Harkon Lukas that “an asthmatic chicken could weave better songs than him.” He responded by slaying her on the spot, and razing her lair. He claimed her journals for himself, and the Mists then claimed the ruins of her lair. The Bone Pudding was then freed from its prison, and has been wandering ever since.



# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## Forbidden Lore

The Register of Monsters is actually cursed. When the mad sage Alxa wrote the Register, the Dark Powers served as his muse. He wrote of many, many eldritch creatures, many of whom lived mostly in his head, or in the Mists. A few have even been spotted in the Nightmare Lands.

Those who would attempt to plumb the secrets of the Register come under the scrutiny of the Dark Powers. For every hour spent reading the Register, the reader has a 5% cumulative chance of discovering a vital secret of a monster, or darklord the reader knows of, or is battling.

Alxa's madness permeates every single page of his Register, and the Dark Powers see to it that those who would know of Alxa's secrets, save only Azalin, will also share Alxa's madness. Each time the Register is read, the reader must make a Madness Check. Failure means that he has uncovered a piece of knowledge so horrifying, that his mind is sundered. Another risk is that if one engages in prolonged study of the Register, one risks becoming a monster. This corruption can be as subtle as becoming so obsessed with studying magic and power, that after decades of long and terrible research, a formula of lichdom is achieved. Or, this corruption can be as graphic as awaking from a dream of being mauled by beasts to watch claw-marks erupt on one's chest.

Those would try to destroy the Register find a different sort of danger. Azalin's magic also permeates every page. Those would try to tear out a page are afflicted with a shockingly severe papercut (treat as a *cause light wounds* that even affects undead). Those who would try to cut out a page have their cutting tool turn against them. The Register is waterproof, and is resistant to electrical damage, and acid. If one tries to burn the accursed book, the fire is instantly extinguished in a huge cloud of smoke.



# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## HOLLOW

By: Conrad Clark (Chaos  
Nomad)

Dear Friend, -

It is with a degree of self-reproach that I dispatch this humble letter, for indeed, were ever I to receive any such correspondence my first thought would be to commit it, immediately, to the flames. Conversely, considering the delicate nature of both your dilemma and my own I would ask only that you digest that which is offered, for in doing so I believe that we will find the contents wholly satisfying.

Initially, therefore, I must ask for your pardon. Naturally, this is a strange way to proceed, but these instances occur not every day.

You have doubtless wondered about the mark –that symbol upon your person, and have you not failed to reach adequate conclusion? Yes, you think of it often, and this is understandable; for no one knows its origin...no one until now.

Are you a duke, a lord, a king? Well, my friend, your import is fully comprehended by myself alone: I can reveal your legacy.

Now, what, I ask you, would a mere soldier do to illumine such a riddle? No, do not incriminate yourself with response that should belittle the small task I ask of you, for is not honor bound by blood. Of course, you could choose to ignore this calling, this test, and wander the wilderness in ‘blessed’ ignorance, with peasants and dogs, until the end. The choice remains yours alone...and be it not for me to judge you, what ever your decision...

If though you are brave, go to the fountain in the middle of the town, for there you shall find a girl. Now, concern yourself not, the

child is not to be harmed, or otherwise impeded, in any manner; in fact, it is vital to your success that she remain untouched. She has a small object: a pipe, of no concern to you but of some sentimental attachment to myself. You are to bring both of them to me. The details are as follows: ...

\* \* \* \*

Against the tavern opening, overhung with tassels and decorated with large pieces of multi-coloured fabric, leaned a similarly adorned lithe, female figure. She had brown hair, which hung long and unkempt around her grubby face, across her tanned shoulders and down to the small of her back, and within it rested an assortment of beads and ribbons of every hue, bright and dark. Her quick, hazel eyes captured the afternoon light and held it, concentrated there, in a delightful embrace; for within them was contained all the bustle, color and motion of the crowded square. Moreover, with this absorbed dynamism she too radiated life, adding a little of her own, untamed and immediate being to the whole of it. Yet, she alone seemed the whole of it; about her, all things revolved.

Between her hands, she held a small crimson pipe, over which her painted fingers danced, like frenzied butterfly wings –up and down, releasing a flurry of vibrant notes. Her music rang forth with clear melody to merge with the laughter, song, and drunken clamor of fervent revelry, and expanded therewith as one great din, echoing off wall and window, wood and stone, until it was lost somewhere between the rows of old houses.

The townsfolk there, whether passing near or far, were all drawn, as magpies to the glint of silver, toward the sweet center of this vortex. And, once there, flocked about the girl, only willing to pass when the congestion behind threatened to overwhelm them entirely, at which

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

point, with feet tapping and arms swaying flagrantly, their radiating joy found its way into all manner of purses and pockets. Such, however, was the unending intensity of the tune that those who drew near quickly tired and, leaning heavily against walls or tables, sagged to the earth.

A member of the watch, curious at the spectacle, fluttered about the edges of the fray, but strayed too close and found himself pulled into the revelry; it was a good tune, after all...and such a pretty face—all smiles and starry eyes...did she wink...she's too young anyway...never-mind...just listen to it...you could listen to this all day...and she certainly deserves a little something for all the effort...was a silver piece enough?...where was it now?

Across the square, encumbered with several large packs, towered a muscular man with a well-defined form. His pale skin stood out against his hair, which was straight and cut in a regular manner, and it was noticeable that this had only recently been done. He watched the crowd as if transfixed and yet made no effort to join them, choosing instead to lower the hold-alls to the ground before reaching slowly across for his sword belt. A chill breeze twisted and furled the spoiled cloth that hung about the square, carrying with it the faintest whimpers of some neglected beast and the arid smell of burnt food. What was she thinking?

Gorfen reviewed the grubby marketplace, casting a cursory glance toward the adjoining streets. The empty cobblestone passageways were quiet, reassuring, but what he knew to be so close aggravated him and he could not help but return his focus to the chaotic assembly by the tavern wall. Except there was something else—insignificant, barely noticeable: a child, neglected, standing alone at the edge of the jumble. His golden hair shone in the failing light and his baggy clothes, although richly colored, were tarnished. He stood in a slovenly, un-fashioned manner. His guardians, as the others, had obviously succumbed to the idiocy of his companion and were probably

dispossessing themselves of what pitiful wealth remained to them.

That, however, was the least of his worries. This thing was more powerful than he had accounted for. What did she think she was doing? There were at least three score here, and nearly all peasants. And what coin would that kind hold? A couple of coppers: enough for a small loaf of bread and some fruit, no gold would be found in this disheveled place. A furrow formed across Gorfen's brow; and to get on the wrong side of the town-watch too, she was really excelling herself. He should take the horses under his command and go right now; leave her here, none would know. No! No, that was not part of the arrangement...

The warrior fingered the hilt of his sword and carefully calculated the situation. However, the child was now watching him, his little face a mixture of hope, expectancy, and fear. The boy attempted a feeble-looking smile and his hands weakly gesticulated some form of invitation. Gorfen could not suppress the smallest of smiles; here was such manifest weakness, and yet ingenuous, moldable, and, for that alone, precious. The warrior fought but failed to contain himself and the smile continued to overcome his hardened features until it spilled over and into him, filling his chest with something hot. Gorfen felt inflamed and uncomfortable. Looking above both boy and chaotic mob, he forced the sensation away, and, moving his hand down from the belt to the resting packs, he hoisted them back over his shoulder. Suffer thee for little children. Very well, the warrior would find another way.

On calling her but once, Gorfen watched the girl move toward him through the stunned crowd. It parted easily, many revelers electing to sit immediately upon the earth, others moving off slowly, holding their heads. The girl's cheeks had a healthy hue and she smiled up at him with full lips. A light still reflected in her eyes. Behind her, everything remained but the pipe, which she still held tightly in one hand.

\* \* \* \*

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

Moving away from the town, the hardened dirt track gradually became softer, giving readily under the hooves of their mounts, but especially to the weightier Gorfen. The land around lay rich and fertile; vast meadows of long grass and flowers sprawled about them, rising into gentle, rolling hills peppered with ancient oak, elm, flowering cherry, and ash; and occasionally came a lake, or pond, about which grazing beasts would rest or wander. The warrior looked at none of these, choosing instead to turn toward the heavens. What he saw there gave him little comfort, for cloud sat black, low and bloated against the horizon. The sun, indeed, gave some small comfort, but it seemed impotent –too weak to break through the murk beneath.

The girl began to whistle and the warrior immediately fixed her with an intense glare. His hard, unforgiving eyes impressed themselves upon her, and framed within the angular features of his face his stare defied her to continue. Tayasha's doe-like eyes widened slightly, and she returned to silence. Satisfied, Gorfen looked across at the horizon to some place, apparently beyond the thief's vision. "We have some way left to go today. I want to reach an outcrop I have heard of before darkness falls. We will be safe there." Tayasha remained silent, leaned over her horse and wrapped her arms about its neck. Gorfen continued, "We have enough sustenance for a few more days. We will make do. I'll try to get you some more at the next settlement." The thief, eyes closed and still holding herself against the beast, was smiling with utter contentment as she rubbed her face in its mane. The warrior directed his gaze upon her again, "I do not want you to use that thing again. Do you hear me?" Tayasha turned towards Gorfen, blew him a kiss, and began giggling hysterically. The warrior's pale skin darkened, "Will you listen, damn you. I cannot believe that you still behave like a child. Do you know nothing of the real world?" The thief, however, did not appear to be listening, but from then on her eyes avoided him, lest he scald the very life from them.

As the pair moved on Gorfen turned away from his immature companion and continued to watch the dusk bleed down from the pregnant skyline. He shuddered and tried to resist the sensation of gloom as the gray shadow spread its shapeless form across the horizon, filling, as it passed, all cracks and hollows with premature night.

"This place," he began, but the thief was looking away and showed no outward sign of acknowledging his presence, "this place feels wrong."

The warrior, tired and uncertain, withdrew his attention from the ominous herald above him and kept his gaze fixed firmly on the track. Silence reigned; the horses' hooves made no sound, the earth absorbing their energy, and no other creature remained abroad; even the girl slept. Time passed and, although the warrior's concentration was exemplary, his focus declined and, relaxing, he fell into a reverie; his rigid features gradually softened and his eyes blurred; and without seam, the disparate lines of the world melted together into one slowly drifting entity.

Something gripped Gorfen tightly, enclosing about him, constricting. Choking, he raised a hand to his throat, but looking upon its warped shape recoiled and sent the beast beneath him into a canter...mist.....everywhere...where was he?

The warrior called out to the girl, but his voice, usually so clear and powerful, seemed smothered. He could hear nothing and see nothing, though he continued to look, over and again, for any regular patterns that were forming within that faint, white sea. Nothing remained stable. The warrior stopped. At length the horse calmed and Gorfen, breathless and weakening, dismounted. He sagged to his knees. He was disoriented and unnerved, and his lungs burned, working only reflexively. The horse remained by his side, waiting. Darkness began to enclose the warrior; his eyelids weighed more than his will. The ground felt cold and damp beneath him and he knew that he ought not remain here; he did

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

not intend to die. The warrior used the last of his effort pulling himself back onto his horse. As he did so, a sound emerged from somewhere beyond his vision; that music, how he wanted not to listen, but his horse moved him forward, even as he faded to unconsciousness.

When he awoke, the girl sat beside him, her teeth gleaming in the dusk. In her hand, she still held a guide rope, affixed to the muzzle of his horse. Quickly, he claimed this back for himself and placed it within his pack, and setting off, moved beyond the girl.

The mist had dissipated and a silver kissed shadow-land lay under the cold moon. No traveler passed by, and no house or abode lay on the path. Was this as he remembered? He was adamant he had not strayed from the path, and yet who could really be certain. He searched earnestly but did not recognize anything about him; however, it had been so long a time and his memory of here was hazy, and as he had been informed of the way there seemed little need for concern. They proceeded and, sure enough, he again recognized the road –it would soon descend into a dell, at the bottom of which lay a pool –clear and still- the warrior had used to review his person on a previous occasions. The pair made their approach, but it soon became apparent to Gorfen that things had altered horribly: it was now stagnant and sat enamored of putridity. On reaching it, they immediately began to cross, but the warrior stopped short and peered down into the illumined water. Something within stirred, but a film of filth obscured his intrusion and he felt compelled to move on, a frown infecting his features. The thief caught his glance and her soft eyes shed for him a tear, but he turned back to the path and rode on.

When there was a path, which was not always the case, Gorfen found it hard to keep his horse upon it; for it's hooves slid on the wet surface and made little or no impression. The thief had no such difficulty and frequently wandered off into the softly lit meadows, stopping here and there to pluck a moisture-laden jewel from a briar. The warrior called her

back on numerous occasions, and, after a time, she would obey, but always there remained a delay, a distance between them.

It was after the warrior had seen the girl returned to her place for the third time that she stared ahead of her and began to back off, behind Gorfen. The warrior saw nothing initially, but following the thief's gaze, he located a solitary rider, trotting at full canter in their direction. The horseman, wrapped in rags and heavily cowled, came through the chill, damp air, like a sore point on the horizon, as if nature rejected him. He strayed not from the path but rode straight forward until he was directly before them, checking about him as he did so, left and right but more often behind. Barely a sound marked his passing. The girl pulled up close behind Gorfen, who made a move for his sword. The figure extended a heavily bandaged hand and made a beckoning gesture toward the girl. The warrior moved into place, between the two, and tried to gauge the purpose of the rider before him; but the horseman's eyes were drowned in shadows, and as he spoke no word Gorfen was forced instead to watch the movement of his form. The potential assailant sat perfectly still with his hand outstretched, seemingly unperturbed. His horse too remained relaxed, and, furthermore, betrayed no sign of the exertion it had recently undertaken. The warrior gripped the hilt of his sword tightly and slowly drew the weapon from its scabbard. The sliding steel resounded and, caught by the moonlight, shimmered with an ethereal light. Gorfen held the blade upright, between himself and the horseman.

“Whoever you are, you have no place on our path. Be on your way.”

The girl moved up as close as was possible, behind the warrior, and began to shiver. She looked away from the road and across the meadow.

She did not flinch when the laugh rang out, hollow and full of something other than life, but instead closed her eyes, remaining motionless.



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Gorfen held his ground and position, but the horseman looked about him hurriedly before skirting the pair, his covered head facing the girl. Gorfen turned with him, barring any passage the rider might seek toward her. It was then that he beheld, beneath one of the many folds of cloth, a mark upon the forearm of the figure. Gorfen froze and stared at it, neglecting to keep pace with the horseman, but no route to the girl was sought and the rider charged past them, disappearing into the darkness. The warrior's body slumped slightly.

An hour passed before the couple came betwixt two groups of hills, the rear of which was surrounded by dense woodland. Amongst one of them lay some kind of structure –perhaps an old monastery, or temple, and Gorfen, observing it, made his way forward with haste. It was not until they were nearly upon it that its ruined state became apparent. Each hard, granite fragment broke up through the dark, grassy hillock like a jagged shard of bone. Their uppermost reaches, caught by the moonlight, seemed to shiver in the cold air –naked and white, and like frightened spirits, eager to escape the earth, they left the deep shadows to bleed and congeal beneath them. In these pools of darkness nature paused, for, though the green, healthy flora of the wild-lands drew close thereon it stuttered, breathless, leaving in its stead a mass of coarse, tapering purple vines. These infested everything in their path, and, clawing against the ruin's unrepentant walls like the dying fingers of some maddened god, they attempted still to bring the whole place down. The air too was stagnant; no sound of beast or bird emerged from within those crumbling walls; it remained insubordinate, an empty space of dark silence, forbidding and oppressive to life.

Gorfen beheld it and tried to control his horse, but the beast rejected his every attempt with impunity. What it knew the warrior could not understand; but even he could feel it, somewhere in his stomach and chest, squeezing the cold up to the nape of his neck and weakening his arms. As always, he dismissed it.

“What is that place?” The words came to him hurriedly as if the speaker were afraid each would petrify and die. Gorfen continued to struggle with his mount; he sat up rigidly upon it and forced the animal's head back with a series of hard jerks. Once the horse had lost some of its fierce resistance the warrior returned to his cultivated sense of poise.

“We must have strayed a little, but, rest assured, here is safer than the wilds. We can fasten the beasts on that old lawn. I will go and look for some fuel. You can see what there is left to eat.”

The warrior pulled himself off his horse and patted one of the animal's sweat-matted flanks. It resisted his touch and tried instead to withdraw the way it had come, shaking its head and neighing. Gorfen pursued the beast, grasped the harness in one of his powerful hands, and forcibly led the creature towards the husk of a long-dead tree. The thief remained seated a dozen yards back, eyes wide, staring at the sporadic patches of torn earth left by the resisting animal.

When neither girl nor horse moved forward, the man called behind him, “I said we would stay here. Would you have us out there, with all manner of menace hidden in the wilderness? Here there are walls. Horses may be afraid of walls, but I shall not be governed by dumb beasts.”

Tayasha, however, did not try to control her skittish mount, but instead appeared to contract its restlessness herself and merely rocked back and forth, shivering, upon it. The warrior ignored the weakness in his companion and, moving across, took the beasts bridle and led the protesting creature to its designated place. The girl's eyes flared as they passed between the shadows, intense, and white, like her knuckles, they burned themselves into the centre of Gorfen's back. The warrior finished securing the animal, which, considering the company of its fellow, now felt encouraged enough to turn its attention toward one of the sparse patches of dying vegetation.

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Gorfen left the girl and wandered off toward the tree line, and, as a fading metallic spark, his form disappeared into the dense foliage. Hulking tree trunks towered above him like crippled giants, looming. Many of them were over one hundred feet tall, and some far greater. From them fanned myriad branches – twisted limbs adorned with dead and dying leaves, which refused whatever weak light they might from passing through. Gorfen stood for several minutes, rigid and confused in the darkness, before he continued, stumbling, searching amongst the fallen leaves for small pieces of dead wood. From somewhere a sigh eased itself between the dead, paper-like leaves of the surrounding trees and caressed the warrior's face. He paid it no heed and did not once falter in his task, until he noticed a lonely silver beam penetrate the shadows. Seeing the light, he moved beneath it and raised his dusty treasure up for inspection. Gorfen's pale skin looked there translucent, and the bundle, offered up upon his outstretched arms, brittle, but the warrior seemingly satisfied, cradled it and returned at once to the ruins.

A small fire was kindled, but the girl, drawing as close to its warmth as her clothing would allow, still looked about her at the dark shadows that danced and twisted between the broken stone pillars, and always did she turn back to the warrior, her eyes ablaze with oranges and reds. Gorfen made no effort to communicate, refused all food, and paid small notice of the girl –who seemed always to be making some effort to distract him. He sat away from the flames, but within their light, staring at them, his expression withdrawn. The warrior watched his blade glint in the firelight for some time before he went over and poured some water from one of the large skins carried by the horses. Quickly he returned and, bracing the sword across one of his strong knees, stroked it with a small block of wet-stone, sharpening its already keen edge.

It was as he allowed himself to drift into the harsh, grating resonance of stone on steel that the music of the pipe cut through his porcelain skin, reverberating throughout his

body. The warrior convulsed and fell in upon himself. No, not here! Gorfen raised his hands to his ears and staggered, stiff limbed, toward the girl, knocking over supplies in his efforts to reach her. He fell once, soundlessly, and thin white sticks littered the ground about him, but, somehow, he rose again and approached her. The thief's eyes echoed the moonlight, shining out toward Gorfen. Rising to her feet, she backed away towards the woodland. He came after her, his rigid legs forcing their way over the ground, and she altered her direction back toward the ruins, blowing frantically on the pipe. Still, he would not relent, and his mouth, twisting from its regular shape to a crooked semblance, dribbled spittle and flinched on half-formed words, "Enough! Would you have of me, girl?" Gorfen stepped forward, extending a hand toward her, but trod then on nothing; his very footing gave way and crumbled beneath him. Air rushed by and the moon streamed upward through the roof of the heavens. Pain! Everything sold itself to the darkness and only his breath remained –short and guttural, echoing off unknown walls. What has she done to me? What place is this? Gorfen slowly extended a hand into the darkness. He felt nothing above him, yet he could already sense that whatever it was beneath lay not in any pleasing manner; something jarred him...something uneven. Lowering one hand, he sought the source of his discomfort. Closing his fingers around one of the objects, he fingered its smooth, rounded surface. He found discrepancies. Pulling the thing up he noticed that it was light and brittle, but also that its surface was broken in places. Holding it above him, toward the distant square of impure light, the weight of the matter fell upon him. Gorfen froze, over-encumbered by the realization. A bone! But what had gnawed it? And, there were more, many more; whenever the warrior reached beneath him he found another. Gorfen soon found that there was something else here too. When he touched it, a shudder crawled up his backbone to the base of his neck. Gorfen pushed his fingers back down; they sank between it, soft and giving, but also dry and bitty, with ends that failed to resist his touch. Slowly, he pulled at it. It came up easily, affixed though it was to some other thing. When held

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

above him, he saw that the light attached itself to countless web-like strands so that they sparkled silver-gold. Beneath them, however, a face stared out at him, cold and fleshless, its hollow eyes epitomizing the darkness. Gorfen dropped it immediately. It was very small; Gorfen wondered what had caused such an unfortunate thing to happen.

A noise reached in a dragged the warrior from his thoughts. From somewhere came the sound of high-pitched laughter, bubbling at the periphery of his hearing. It reached him in his hole but was deadened by the place and he could not locate it. A shadow fell across him and he looked up. Its owner was silhouetted against the pale background, and their head, emerging and withdrawing as it did, appeared to the warrior as a small black disk, enshrouded by silver light.

“Stay there. I will find a way from this place.”

The shadow disappeared and the Gorfen found himself staring at an empty square of light. Peals of laughter washed over him and, shuddering, he tried to push himself up onto his haunches. With effort, he righted himself; it was not as bad as he had thought; he had obviously fallen through the roof of a cellar, as had this other unfortunate soul. If only there existed some light in this place, then he would find his way out for good; he wished not to remain here a moment longer. Upwards. Bones cracked underfoot, the sound reverberating. A long, low creaking came from the darkness. Gorfen reached for his sword and felt a reassurance at its touch. The blade came easily from the scabbard, and even in this dark pit it held the light. Or, was there something else? A sliver of light marked him, from head to toe. Before him, the warrior could discern an opening and moved toward it with haste. Laughter found its way through the slight gap and the light at its base was briefly obstructed. The warrior paused, for a second only, before continuing on, forcing his way through the narrow opening. There was nothing there but a spiral of worn stone steps, faintly lit by the freezing moon. The hair on the Gorfen’s body rose and his fingertips tingled.

Quickly, he proceeded to ascend the steps. Behind him, from the darkness, came a small snicker. The warrior moved rapidly on, forgoing any opportunity to review his progress. As he reached the pinnacle of the steps, the pain of his wounds gripped him and, moving toward the firelight, he lowered himself within sight of the sleeping thief.

The dawn brought hope anew; in the bright light of morning, the warrior’s wounds all seemed superficial, although he seemed stooped as if unable to support some great weight that bore down upon him. The girl though looked in fine health –she raised her eyes to Gorfen, and he saw their depth. Gorfen threw her a glance, for his sores burned, but seeing that she was unaffected, he turned his attention to the road ahead.

All that day the pair rode on, until they came over the brow of a great hill and saw a town spread out beneath them. Its composition brought a smile to Gorfen’s face: a fine white temple, with tall, elegant spires; a hall, upheld with sturdy pillars; a library; houses, large and small; and a central square, about which everything rested in a precise, crafted harmony. Beyond them, on the other side of the buildings –amongst some hills that completed a crescent around the other side of the town, there sat a darker, broken structure. The warrior appeared not to notice this, but the girl, now relegated to his shadow, observed it, though no expression marked her features.

Gorfen set off with earnest, down the slope, spurring his mount onward with such vigor that the thief was forced to chase him. The warrior sat upright once more, for all evidence of his fall the night before evaporated at the sight of that place. This was the place; he knew it. His joy, however, was short lived, for closer inspection revealed the appalling truth. The entwined streets, rather than grant each other much needed support, bore down upon one another, over encumbered, or so they seemed, by the desperate assemblage of rotting wood and soft, inadequate stone. The temple towers sat cracked and in a state of disrepair, and within

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them the bells hung, rusting and mute in their off-white prisons. Even the great old walls lay broken in places, the strength from them pilfered for petty uses, revealing many a darkened vacuum in its finery. As such stood the shantytown—a dirty, hulking beast perched atop the decaying bones of a finer time, for what architectural grandeur yet remained lay hidden beneath its diseased exterior. Moreover, within its shadows, among the foreboding avenues, darkened corridors, and secret places, flourished all manner of serpents, self serving and rotten to the core.

All this Gorfen knew—he sensed it somewhere, in a memory, but this he could not recall. Here lay gold, but festered with the blackest filth: a proud race, diseased and discarded. Whatever held sway here cared no more for these people. Beggars skulked about the main avenues, sometimes in huddles, but mostly alone, their eyes moving toward any opportunity, however small. And every one of them was destitute, compromised to a place where age, gender, and ancestry had become inconsequential. Children, unwashed and unfed, nested down in great numbers like rats among the broken piles of rubble and crate-wood; many ran naked through the back alleys, covered in dirt and detritus, screaming in both confusion and hunger, but most sat unmoving, enshrouded like perverse lords in robes of blackened sackcloth, staring, silent and defeated, at some distant place in their imagination.

As the couple slowly trudged along the filth-ridden streets, Gorfen beheld the spectacle and sagged. A presence existed there that tapped his spirit and further blackened all impression of any remaining innocence. And though he resisted, the warrior felt a terrible, unseen wrath, like Damocles' sword, hang above him.

Gorfen cared not for the prospect of finding any establishment of repute, but led the pair further inside the maze of squalor, regardless. The thief wore an expression of condemnation—head down, her pain seemingly consummate with his own. At times, though, the warrior noticed the light glint off her eyes,

especially at those moments when his attention was diverted elsewhere; she would watch him, but he could not face her gaze.

He noticed too the looks she received from others, although mostly the old; it was more as if she stole their attention, for they stared after her down the dirty streets, oblivious to the movements of others about them. Always, the thief avoided them, moving beside the warrior that he might shield her.

Gorfen led the girl centre of the town, and there, amid the houses, halls, and alleyways, sat a small inn. As she approached it, people came toward her. Most were dressed in rags, with dull eyes and pained expressions, their hands outstretched. Again, the thief moved behind the warrior. Gorfen lowered his hand and felt for his sword; there were so many. How could he protect her? Had he not already done as he was asked? The thief took herself from her horse and walked toward the opening. Gorfen dismounted and marched after her, watching the way the colors of her frock swam in the afternoon light; all light moved into them. The off-white inn walls were peppered with small marks of all kinds, and all of the windows were heavily shuttered. All looked dark within. The girl stepped inside and the warrior followed her, slamming the door shut behind.

Those outside scrambled toward the door and any window they could find, but their way was barred. From inside came the sound of pipe music, drifting out from whatever cracks it found. The assembly, seemingly maddened, reached inside whatever pockets remained to them and cast anything they held dear at the building. Small bits of stone, wood, and metal rained upon the walls and windows, resounding about the square and drowning out both the melody and the eldritch screams within. After a time everything stopped, and the shoulders of those wretches sagged in the respite.

Slowly the door opened and Gorfen emerged, his lined face a mask of pain. In his arms he held the thief, who laid prone, her face

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hidden. A trickle of blood moved down the warrior's broad chin.

The crowd exploded with fury, some hurling threats and insults at him, others imploring, "Thief, return my own", "Beast, you shall die for this travesty", "Leave us not empty."

Gorfen ignored them all and ran from that place, brushing them aside. His horse made a move toward him, but he ignored it and proceeded down a small winding street, toward the outskirts of town. The sunlight began to fade fast, smothered by a great shadow, and Gorfen beheld a mass of dark cloud hanging in the sky above. Behind him, echoing down the streets and narrow passageways, there followed a great commotion. Gorfen shuddered and turned. An aged man stood at the opening of an adjoining alleyway, his golden hair dulled by time and the shadow. He seemed used and bent but managed still to hold forth his arm and the warrior saw that it was marked. "Go on to the hills, to the temple. Run. Pray he can help you before it is too late." The warrior looked about him frantically before turning back to the man, but he had gone, and all he could do was run.

\* \* \* \*

A hazy shroud had moved upon the hillocks and the familiar, inky darkness followed; it seemed to seep closer whenever his attention was diverted, swelling up at the edges of his vision, slowly encroaching through the sporadic bursts of rain. He knew time betrayed him, and each wasted step pulled at him. But, it was hopeless. Gorfen paused momentarily, arched the unconscious form over his shoulders, and continued to ascend. The thief's fragile body was as nothing to the powerful warrior; his strength overmatched hers many times and her weight, even dead, remained negligible. Still, he was burdened; each step became more labored than the last and the muscles across his great back quivered uncontrollably. He stopped again. This could not be. It was not supposed to end this way. Gorfen needed strength, now more than ever, but it refused to obey. The warrior

was changing. His visage, recently so firm, had grown haggard; the coarse lines across his brow had spread to enclose a pair of sallow eyes, and, unrelenting, threatened to further invade the gaunt flesh of his cheeks and neck. And whatever it was that prayed upon him not only touched flesh; it continually called something inside, almost imperceptibly... something deeper; it called him home. Somehow, he recognized it: he knew it, though it was a place he had never been. He felt so weak, but on the threshold of something more than real. The eager cries behind the warrior faded to nothing – mere sounds among the general din of an overpowering, living thought. Gorfen stood once more among the campfires of his youth, and before him, wed to hide, bone, and iron, sat enthroned the huge battle-chief.

A pain erupted somewhere close and, through the mist in his conscience, Gorfen decided that it must be his. The warrior's very being gave pause, for, just as it had then, the hair across his body rose at the memory of that hallowed voice. A cold sweat began to form across the warrior's temples as he earnestly mouthed the words of his great mentor. Physical strength, he understood, would solve almost all problems, and no true warrior, large or small, lacked for it. Real might, though, came from within –not from muscle or steel, but from somewhere beyond the flesh. But this greatness had remained unknown to Gorfen; he knew not where to look; and no god had ever answered his call. No, this battle could not be won.

As the final, disparate, bands of deep crimson fell beyond the crest, so did all thought of salvation, and, along with it, Gorfen's last hope for Tayasha. The wan, reflected, light in the warrior's eyes faded and fell dead. More words washed over him –quiet and full of promise, but somehow unbearable. All of the warrior's sinews set briefly to strain against the weight of them; and his legs fought vainly for control, searched for some form of command, but finding nothing, buckled. Something flickered and faded within. Gorfen fell forward onto the grassy bank and lay still, waiting for his personal night to fall; but even as he urged on

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the suffocating darkness, begged for the fall of swords and axes to end his shame and torment, something else resisted. The world, darker yet more vivid, slowly filtered back into place, and even as the hastened cries of his pursuers echoed around him, he knew. He had failed; he had lacked even the strength to save one woman, doomed to a death beside him. Tears welled and rimmed his heavy, shadowed orbs, falling salty-hot onto the sodden earth. Why must she also suffer? Forever would he spit on this bitter fate, for though he yet lived he cared no more for life... alone. Then, amid the black, strengthening rain, he realized that he loved her.

Too soon his enemies were about him, unleashing a crescendo of euphoric cries, mocking in their vile triumph. But, behind them, faint as a whisper yet with the potency of a hurricane, came once more the softest voice, and, digging his powerful fingers several inches through earth and gravel, Gorfen finally understood.

The scream that issued from the warrior's body ruptured the very air. All living things fell silent. Beyond thought, Gorfen's hand found his great steel sword and, springing cat-like to his feet, he swung it out behind him catching the first descending blade with such force that he sent its broken fragments arching dozens of feet upwards. Moreover, such was the speed and frenzy of Gorfen's attacks that even as those shards yet fell earthward the warrior had turned, fell eyed, and brought his weapon twice more to bear. The first foe could only watch in horror as an arc of metal, powerful enough to sever a wild boar, drove through its already fractured arm and continued unaffected through both the crude metal and flesh of its torso. The second, either skilled or driven by sheer desperation, fended off Gorfen's blow two handed, losing three fingers from one as the warrior's forced his sword down the shaft of its axe.

The cries of triumph that echoed only moments earlier died quickly, to be reborn in the darkness and rain as the sourest tribulation. Blow after cruel blow fell upon Gorfen's foes,

as, faster than any man could there discern, the warrior moved like a fiend among them. Yet it was not the sword that they feared; a death by such means, though harsh, meant little to those that lived by steel; another fate stared after them, hateful but with delight, reflected in the bloodshot orbs that sought out each one and sent them to the shadow.

The slaughter continued, for such it was, and Gorfen exulted in it; bodies lay strewn upon the grass –piled atop one another, frozen, and half decimated, each wearing a unique face of terror. Most ran, but he pursued them to the last, moving nimbly across the slopes with great strides before cutting them down. The warrior's veins burned; a battle of pain raged inside him, and he sated it with the blood he spilled –fresh, crimson life, released, spraying into the air and flowing freely onto the earth. Gorfen breathed it in, took it upon himself and for himself. He was all, the center...Tayasha.

The girl lay motionless where he had left her, the pipe still grasped in her hand. Did any life yet remain within her? Moving over to her, the warrior placed his hands about her, lifting her upward easily...just the faintest trace. He carried her up the last few steps, to the brow of the hill, but her scent began to overpower him and he lowered her to the earth once more. A red haze hung over and about her body and Gorfen felt irresistibly drawn toward it. He looked toward the moon as if searching for an answer; the girl needed him, but he also needed. A pain wracked him, doubling him over. Gorfen clutched at his arms and chest, his mouth growing wider. He fell to his knees, above the prostrate body of the girl, and released a low moan. Teeth, thin and white, forced their way down through his gums and the crimson mist reflected off his bloodshot eyes. He breathed her scent deeply in and gasped, balling his hands into great fists. No, this was not part of the deal...

A shadow fell then across the warrior and, sensing in it a great energy, Gorfen found the self-composure to force himself away from his dichotomy. There, atop a mighty, black



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steed, sat a slender man, robed in the garments of a practitioner of the arts, and just beyond him, shrouded in mist, stood a great, derelict temple. Gorfen released a guttural snarl and bore his teeth at the threat. The rider's visage was shadowed, but Gorfen could see that the man bore upon him some disfigurement, which, so he presumed, added the harsh edge to his voice.

"Excellent my friend, you have done masterfully well and proved yourself a worthy addition. Now at last the wheels of my plan shall turn with full force. You are the balance I have sought for so long now...and you cannot know how long. Are you still seeking an answer, my young friend? Well, of course, that should not be as it could have, but all the same..." Pausing, the man turned his horse about and faced the centre of the temple. There, entrusted by chains to the apex of its crumbling structure, hung affixed the golden statue of some forgotten power; erect with magnificence, its emblazoned head rupturing the midnight-blue skyline like a ghastly second sun. Yet it seemed impotent - paralyzed by the residual tides of lichen, grime and dirt that encrusted its too finely crafted form- its visage vainly overlooking the deformity of a town that spawned and festered uncontrollably beneath it.

"Oh, come now, he has failed. Failed magnificently, but failed nonetheless. Did not several times we see him fall...yes, so he rose again, but look at him now, he is filled with her, he is lost to you... You are aware of the deal, old one, and should you forget do not think that my master would not hear of it...I shall use him as I see fit, and he will serve me well...hahaha, yes, one day, father...perhaps others exists, but each time I grow stronger and you decline with your hopeless dreams. And this one has proved strong indeed."

From somewhere, Gorfen found the strength to rise. He left the prone form of Tayasha beneath him and made his way around the side of the magician's great horse. No outward sign displayed itself in the man's movements, but the magician was obviously aware of the warrior's intent. As he spoke, he casually extended one hand, palm upward, and the pipe appeared upon it.

"Now, now, my young friend, you dance to my tune, so watch your step."

The warrior bared his fangs and sprang forward toward the horse, drawing his blade in one fluid motion, but before he could take more than a few paces the pipe sounded and he halted in mid-step.

"Foolish boy, I am your master now; all honor and glory belong to me, and you will give it."

Gorfen face twitched with effort and he managed a snarl, his eyes burning up at his aggressor. The magician raised an eyebrow and played several more notes. The warrior dropped to his knees and the sword fell from his fingers. His head bowed and a low moan escaped his lips.

"Is anything wrong, my dear, young friend?"

The clouds parted then, for just the briefest moment, and a gentle silver glow fell upon the hilltop. Gorfen's head snapped up at great speed and the magician moved back suddenly in his saddle.

"Nothing, my master."



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## MONSTERS YOU WILL NEVER SEE IN THE USS... BUT AS THEY SAY IN DARKON, "NEVER SAY NEVER"...

"When you think it's done, turn them"

-- Chef Paul Prud'home, "Cooking  
Souragne style"

By: [Kargatane message board](#) (Summer 2002 -  
*You know who you are and you should be  
ashamed !*)

Arranged by Joël Paquin ([under threats](#))

Nothing was censored... (you were warned!)

\*\*\*

As we know, there are many definitions  
and approaches to horror. But sometimes, horror  
strikes us in the most common and ordinary  
places, and in broad day light.

Following is a list of monsters we  
sincerely hope we'll never see in the USS  
netbook...

\*\*\*

### [Dragons](#)

Cubic Zirconium Dragon

The Shanghai Rose Quartz Dragon

That-Silvery-Crap-You-Scratch-Off-Instant-  
Win-Game-Cards Dragon.

Depleted Uranium Dragon.  
Aluminum Siding Dragon.

a *Rainbow* dragon? With a multi-colored breath  
weapon that acts as a girdle of opposite gender...

Perspiration Dragon

Gas Dragon

the dreaded new creatures-combined-with-  
dragons category! Beware, the DRAGSTER! A  
fearful, dress wearing creature! Part dragon, part  
hamster, all fury!

About the previous, someone asked: Is that  
"fury" with a single "r" or two? In any case it,  
too, ain't pretty

Beige Dragon

Sodium Dragon (spray it with water for an easy  
kill)

Dragon, Hot Pink

Dragon, Neon Green

### [Flumphs](#)

Flumphs (and even were-flumphs !)

### [Giants](#)

Giants, They Might Be

Giants, New York  
Giants, San Francisco  
[Golems](#)

Plaster of Paris would probably make a better  
Golem than Dragon. With that in mind...

The-Stuff-That-Clogs-Up-The-Shower-Drain  
Golem

Gore Golem (carved from wood, with a metal  
rod up its rear end)

Dubya Golem (created from the manure of male  
cows)

Clinton Golem (.....naw)

The 1980's Standup Comedy Golem

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Used Tissue Golem (eww...)

Golem, Paper Doll (now with the paper doll golem, would it have little fold on clothes? And could it change clothes far too often? That would really just complete the mental picture. "New from barbie, now he walks talks and reacts too! Not only can he act like a real person and obey basic commands, you can change his clothes and even get the accessory pack!")

Golem, Comb

Golem, Cigarette End

Decaffeinated Coffee Golem- its touch acts as a Sleep spell

Chad Golem- all election proceedings must make a Will save or be paralyzed

Doughnut Golem- usually ends up being eaten by the town guards

Golem, Lemming - likes to jump from tall objects, usually onto people for a soft landing.  
Golem, Cell

Golem, matter

Golem, sink matter

Golem, Doll (Hasbro toys). Picture shows a doll with Harry Potters head, GI Joe's kung fu arm, Furbies torso, Starscreams arm, Pikachu's right leg and Robo-chi's left.

## Hamster

Giant Space Hamsters:

They are real Spelljammer creatures. They are raised by space gnomes, who farm them for their succulent meat, known as 'spahm'. Slightly (as in, very slightly) more dangerous than the domesticated Giant Space Hamster is the Rather Wild Giant Space Hamster.

There were variations proposed with the Giant Space Hamster, one of which was the Saber

Toothed Giant Hamster Rex ! (a genuine 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. creature)

About these, we can see the great hero standing before his god after a climatic battle...

God: You have died in battle. But tell us now what fell beast finally killed our greatest hero. Was it the dreaded Tarrasque?

Hero: Ummm no.

God: The largest of the foul dragons?

Hero: Sorry no?

God: A daemon from the abyss? A foul wizard? A hord of drow?

Hero: Nope, nope and nope.

God: Then what praytell killed you.

Hero: ummmm.....a hamster.....

God; MU hahahahah!

Hero: But....But it was THIS big!

Weren't these things supremely intelligent, grasping the most obscure of concepts and living in absolute peace and harmony with their surroundings? Or am I imagining hearing something about a rumor that some guy told a friend's best friend's girlfriend in the bathroom of a truckstop in the middle of Bugsville, Wyoming?

## Humans

2nd Edition Player (an undead template?)

Human, Not-so

Half-human

Mundane (like "fiendish" or "celestial")

## Lycanthrope

Lycanthrope, were-platypus

Lycanthrope, were-three toed sloth

Lycanthrope, were-chihuahua

Lycanthrope, were-armadillo

Were-cockroach. You could live for days without a head. Though the same could be said for a werechicken. Well really any werepoultry.

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Lycanthrope, Were-giantspacehamster

Lycanthrope, Sexy Manga-style Were-cheetah

Lycanthrope, were-butterfly

Were-manitee

Were-moth

Were-pikachu

Were-leech

Were-rabbit

Were-wasp

Were-fly

Were-whale (blue), were-whale (white), were-whale (sperm whale) - can't stay in most hotels

Were-ladybird

Were-munchkin

Were-chipmunk

Were-urchin

Were-mollusc

Were-dinosaur

Were-aardvark

Were-ant

Lycanthrope, Werhuman

Were-cucumber

Were-animaltrainer

Were-girl

Were-boy

Were-panda

Were-piglet

Were-geese

Were-cat (pink and cute)

Were-Yeti-riding-ox-holding-swan-and-eel

Were-moneyspider

Were-book

Were-candlabra

Were-goldfish

Were-tequila worm

Were-poodle

Were-hypo, Constipated

Were-newt

Were-squirrel

Were-chinchilla

Were-gecko

Were-skink

Were-trout

Were-sunfish

Were-bass

Were-minnow

Were-plankton

Were-were. Or, alternately, the werewhere, which is a person who changes into a blinkdog on the night of the full moon.

For the whole "mostly harmless lycanthrope" bit, from an episode of Star Trek: Were-tribble

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Wererat, Greater (Politician)  
Wereshark, Greater (Lawyer)

Were-kraken  
If dead: Kraken, Breaded+Fried (aka Krakenmari)

Were-ameoba

Were-flu

Were-weasel

Were-chair

Were-have all the cowboys gone

were-space hamsters go to die

Were-and tear

Were-weasel

Were- were, were, were's, wally

Were-am i

Were-bear (care). Its mindless lovey dovey chatter causes all hearing to make a madness check.

Were-Ray cursed to turn into some guy named Ray

Were-dicemonkey A rare lycanthrope who disrupts otherwise good roleplaying campaigns by insisting everyone roll for the slightest actions and that combat occur at least twice as frequently as actual plot development.

## Undead

First Cousin Twice Removed of Kyuss  
(not nearly as frightening as the Redneck Sons/Brothers/Fathers/Uncles/Cousins of Kyuss)

Undead sushi, or even worse, living, cannibal sushi...

Vampire, CEO

## Miscellaneous

Hash Rat (disguises itself as food for campers, when they eat it, they become violently ill. Comes in multiple colors, the most noxious of which is Green).

Mauve Death (Feeds only on male hairdressers and fashion designers)

Abyssal Sulker

Fiendish anarchic half-black dragon multiheaded Tarrasque

The Crotch Hugger (disguises itself as an athletic cup, then attacks).

Myconid Puffballs  
Neanderthal Amish Death Cultists from Central Mongolia! Mwhahahahaha!

Doomguard, Lesser, Leisure suit

Psychotropic Myconids

Supplicating Claw

Two-Eyed Cyclops

Baby Oil Beetle

Ogre, Crossdressing

Tarrasque, Emotionally Scarred

Depending on the technology level of the world you could have:  
Fodder, Cannon or Fodder, Trebuchet.

Fodder, fireball  
Fodder, Giant's rock  
Fodder, Azalin's flaming kitties  
Fodder, poison gas (they all inhale simultaneously to inhale as much gas as possible to clear the atmosphere.)

Dinosaur, Barney the Purple

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Dire Chihuahua- fully twice as large as a regular chihuahua (of all the unholy terrors to unleash on the world of DnD this has to be the most truly terrifying, a chihuahua the size of a common rat...)

Butt Kraken-a giant, double-headed octopus, only surfaces on the night of the full moon

The Fly- a human scientist, who, while experimenting with teleportation, accidentally gets combined with his own pants zipper

Sorta Ticked-off Wind

Ethereal Annoyance

From a previously released list of silly monsters (April fools issue of *Dragon* in 96, #228, or so we were told):

1. Garlic Bread Golem
2. Chocolate Easter Bunny Golem
3. Peanut Butter filled Chocolate Easter Bunny Golem
4. Crunchy Peanut Butter filled Chocolate Easter Bunny Golem

In that issue, instead of doing their monthly "First Quest" column they did one called "Final Quest" about the top 10 worst ways for a character to die. The worst was to the garlic bread golem. (It came in just ahead of being

killed by a flumph.) This issue also had stats for not just the chocolate golem (solid and hollow) as well as the plush golem.

Now, Wizards of the Coast does allow Arthaus to make companion books of cross-over products:

- Van Richten's Guide to Dread Pokemon
- Hogwart's Arsenal

And finally, from *The Far Side* MC:

Cow, Dread  
Duck, Dread  
Chicken, Dread  
Poultrygeist  
Spare Armadillo  
Mad Scientist  
Smoking Dinosaur  
Overly Inventive Caveman  
Woman with Beehive hairdo  
Squat kid with buzzcut and glasses  
Cheetah in sneakers  
Bizarre tropical tribesmen  
Vampcow  
Beware of Doug

(Thank the Dark Powers it's over)





The Undead Sea Scrolls

# Masque of the Red Death

Scientiae Arcanum

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

## HUACA DE LA LUNA

### THREE EUROPEAN HORRORS LURKING IN THE ANDES

By: Luiz Eduardo Neves  
Peret  
(Lord Arijani)

This is one of the oldest  
sacrificial sites in  
South America, brought to  
Gothic Earth in all its  
grisly pomp and  
circumstance.

#### Introduction

The Andes are full of mysterious places, hidden valleys, ancient cities and monuments built in the most inaccessible sites, suspended gardens over volcanic beds and mines that extend from their entrances at 10,000 feet to subterranean galleries below sea level. There is little oxygen, food is scarce, travel is difficult, and earthquakes and volcanic activity are a constant threat.

When the Spanish explorers arrived here in the 16th century, looking for precious metals, there were several places they never found, for they believed no one could ever survive the harsh conditions. The Inca Empire dominated a large area with a reasonable level of organization and counted thousands of warriors, but was no match for the superior technology and strategies of the conquerors. However, they were able to keep several of their cities well hidden in the most unlikely places, particularly unstable plateaus and valleys.

And, unknown to most people, there were certain places where even the Incas would

not go. One such place, located in Peru, was revealed to the world in the late 1800s. Archeologists from several countries have already arrived here, along with adventurers trying to see if they can find the legendary Eldorado, and military troops with orders to secure the area - and guarantee that any gold or silver found will be safely stored in the local government's vaults. But, with gold and silver, they have found other things - or rather, other things have found them.

Pyramids of the sun and  
the moon

Somewhere in the Andes, in northern Peru, beside the Cierro Blanco peak, there is a lower mountain, with the almost exact shape of a pyramid. The two peaks are surrounded by a vast plateau, in a parched, arid region high above heavy clouds, which makes the entire area virtually invisible and inaccessible from the ground below. Rain and snowstorms are rare, almost never happening. Only dust storms ravage the plateau frequently.

In that forsaken place between the two mountains, explorers in the 1850s have found two huge buildings, first thought to be natural rocky formations. After a more careful observation, they realized they had found two of the largest buildings in Pre-Colombian America, each with more than 100ft. in height. What a surprise it was for them, when they discovered that neither building was made by the Incas or their vassals, but by an entirely different and much older culture! Actually, the Incas had avoided the area, and several superstitions and old legends referred to the site as haunted and cursed.

These ancient people are known today as the Moche, after the name of the main river

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crossing the region. According to tradition, they were an unexpressive band of pre-historic-styled hunter-gatherers who chose to travel ever higher into the Andes and eventually disappeared from sight altogether, centuries before the Incas arrived. In the 16th Century, they were only a legend, even to the locals.

As the Incas and other civilizations in the region had no "written language" in the strict sense, recording everything in a complex system of knots in wool (known as "quipos"), it was very difficult to track down the fate of anyone before the Incas expanded and dominated most of the Andes. Therefore, most scientists and adventurers simply ignored those civilizations altogether, as they were far more interested in the Inca Empire (for various and sometimes not very honorable reasons), and thus they would not go too much farther beyond the known frontiers of the Empire.

All this changed in the late 1850s, when a small band of adventurers stumbled upon some gold and silver artifacts that were quite different in style from anything the Incas had produced. The items were found quite by accident while the foreigners were trading goods with locals. After the turmoil that followed the independence wars of 1824-25, the populations of both Peru and Bolivia would sometimes trade their ancestors' tools and jewels for foreign money or modern implements, or would do that just to keep foreigners interested in the legend of El Dorado, keeping people from Europe and North America coming after buried treasures, hidden mines and lost cities. After all, from 1492 to the early 1600s, the Spanish conquerors had transferred almost two hundred thousand tons of gold and at least fifteen thousand tons of silver from the Andes to their own coffers, and the perspective was that a lot more gold and silver could be there, just waiting to be explored.

The finding of the artifacts attracted the attention of several other adventurers and treasure hunters, followed close by true explorers and scientists. After more than ten years of digging, many either were dead or had given up the site for other, more profitable areas,

but a few remained. It seemed to them that the archeological treasure was just waiting for the dust to settle down to make an appearance: after breaking the stony wall of a subterranean aisle, they found a large chamber with a bizarre and dreadful decoration: human bones were part of the very structure of the walls, helping hold them up despite so many years. The hall was full of exquisitely crafted clay vases, in the shape of human figures in different positions, most of them in rows, as if telling a tale.

The scientists started a long research, cataloging the items with care in an attempt to figure out a reason for their presence there. The vases were empty and clean as if they had never been used, and this amazed the explorers even more because, apparently, there was no tomb. The presence of a tomb, they knew, would explain the creation and storage of rows of tools and mundane equipment, which was supposed to be used by the dead in their afterlife. There was no explanation, however, for this creepy storage room. The vases were transferred to museums in Lima for further analysis.

Years after that, they made even more morbid discoveries. In an atrium outside the chamber, they found scattered human bones of several people. Their first idea was that of a sacrificial room of sorts. This was proven not to be the case, though, as there were evidences of combat involving the dead bodies. Furthermore, most bones were definitely arranged in a pattern and there were deep cut marks in most, indicating the separation of limbs, trunk and heads.

When the bones were studied in light of what had been discovered about the vases, a terrible truth came upon the scientists: those people had all been strong men, who had been put to a deadly fight, and later one their bodies had been cut down to pieces, their bones cleaned of all flesh, their blood collected and taken somewhere else. It apparently had been a combat followed by the consuming of the losers.

Some of the vases portrayed such gruesome ceremonies, with priests and warriors

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feasting upon the remains of other people, and above them, three taller, more sinister figures toasting with blood-filled chalices. The first was a strong, massive male warrior, clad in strange armor; the second had a plumed robe and a bird mask covering his head, and the third, always one step below the two others, was a female dressed with a skirt of snakes and feathers. They were labeled as "Figure A", "Figure B" and "Figure C" and later on were nicknamed "The Warlord", "The Birdman" and "The Snake Lady".

First, they were thought to be high priests, but as the three images appeared in the same positions over and over, depicted in ceramics and walls dated through a range of hundreds of years, most scientists believed them to be mythological images, gods or something like that. But soon they would be proven wrong. The two pyramids were known as "Huaca del Sol" and "Huaca de la Luna", translated as Pyramid of the Sun and Pyramid of the Moon. As with many other ancient buildings, they were disposed as part of a gigantic calendar and had pillars marking important dates.

In 1887, grave robbers following an expedition into the Huaca de la Luna found a stone sarcophagus with the skeleton of a man covered in massive gold attires, surrounded by fantastic animal figurines made of clay and stone, all ferocious and apparently bathed in dried blood. The man had a bird mask on his face, a silver shortspear and a silver chalice near his hand. The chalice was covered by a think layer of a dark substance. After dealing with the robbers, the explorers performed a few tests in the goblet and discovered, much to their astonishment, that it had been used to hold human blood, for a period of at least 300 years. The scientists found it strange that someone apparently so important had not been mummified, according to local traditions, but they dismissed it, believing that perhaps that man had been one of the last Moche priests and by that time their civilization could be so degenerated and decadent that they no longer mummified their dead. The body was also sent to Lima for further studies.

In 1888, at the very center of the same pyramid, a place thought to be made of massive stone, a second, larger sarcophagus was found. The skeleton inside was of a tall man, taller than anyone else found in any place in the Andes so far, and he wore ceremonial armor made of the purest gold. The armor design was different from anything ever seen in South America, resembling Middle-Age scale mail. He held an enormous, very heavy silver mace in his hand, and there was a silver chalice by his side, an exact copy of the other, and just as smeared in dried blood.

The scientists were finally convinced that this was the infamous "Figure A" and that the other they had found before was "Figure B". They theorized that those had been the last priests of those mysterious deities and had been buried in the walls of the pyramid in dire times. All that was left of them were their perfectly arranged skeletons, the only ones found intact. By that time, the explorers had gotten used to find layers of 60-90 skeletons, all male, with their bones scattered in specific patterns, marking the passage of quarters of the year. So far, the equivalent of thousands of strong, young men had been found and had been cataloged in a massive, seemingly endless work. It was amazing that those two pyramids had been the site of so many, continuous deaths, in such heights. There was another mystery to be solved: why did so many men end up here, considering that only those ritual deaths accounted for 150-350 deaths per year?

The answer came from another excavation site: by the Pacific shores, west of the two Huacas, where scientists gradually found indications of Moche presence. According to the data collected, that "unexpressive" nation had grow a lot before the Incas ever arrived, covering an area of 20,000 square miles, from the shores up to the mountains, living in peace as fishermen and farmers. They accounted for more than 100,000 inhabitants by the middle of the 5th Century, divided among 14 large cities and several smaller villages. From the Huacas, far above their towns made of bricks and riddled

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by a complex irrigation system, their "gods" watched them and took care of them. But different from Inca culture, the Moche did not simply sacrifice captives to their gods. They promoted deadly inter-city disputes every three months, with the losers being shared between the three high priests, the clergy, the winners, the soldiers and, in a very meager dose, the population around them.

This was clearly proven by a careful study of the faces portrayed in the ceramic vases: the same man was seen one year as a winner, a powerful soldier, and years later, as a captive and then as a sacrificial victim. That was the meaning of the rows, they told the tale of the brave soldiers who had lost the competition. The Moche cannibalized their own. Actually, a large percentage of the mortar used in the construction of the Pyramid of the Moon was a mixture of blood and other bodily fluids collected after death, meaning that the bodies of the losers had been used in the very construction of that sinister place.

In 1891, going deep into the highest area of the pyramid, archeologists finally found the third figure: a tall woman, wearing a dress made of gold, shaped as snakes and owl feathers. She also had a blood-soaked silver goblet, and a silver dagger, which was obviously not part of Moche traditional blacksmith. The items found with the three were a mystery by themselves, as well as their height and physical features that distinguished them from the Moche.

By that same decade, other explorers made yet another macabre finding: observing a sculpture found 20 years earlier that looked like a mountain, with people sitting on its sides and a person dead in the lowest surface, they began to believe that there was a sacrificial site somewhere there, after all.

Searching the side of the mountain near the Pyramid of the Sun, however, they had found nothing to prove their theory, until one mountaineer decide to conquer the Cierro Blanco. The attempt ended tragically, with the apparently well-braced adventurer falling to

death, just 50 feet above the pyramid. When they recovered his body, they noticed tiny burn marks which were inconsistent with his death in such a cold place. Reports of strange, tiny light points, similar to fireflies, surrounding the mountaineer just before his fall, were dismissed as local superstition.

Examining the site of his fall, they finally found the sacrificial area: the entire mountain! At some point, near the end of their age, not all the Moches took part in the ritual combats, preferring to revere the Sun God in a different manner. They would go up the mountain, gather in certain places, and push a selected individual to his death below, so that his blood would wash the top of the Pyramid of the Sun. The scientists discovered why there was no immediate evidence of those sacrifices: the very dust over the mountain base and the top of the Huaca del Sol was mostly composed of human remains.

Later on, evidence was found to prove that there was bitter rivalry between the two pyramids and that the three skeletons found in Huaca de la Luna represented only one sect of their religious traditions, using silver as their sacred metal and symbol. This only added to the puzzle, however, as the three figures were found covered in massive, golden ritual vestments, which went completely against everything known about them so far. The widely accepted theory was that, after having weakened their own ranks with mass slaughters, and having finally been beaten by their rivals from the Pyramid of the Sun, those three had been entombed under a mocking version of their own ceremonial clothes, made of gold to add to their shame.

The scientific research was suddenly halted by order of the local government, because of a scandalous event: the three skeletons disappeared a few days after being transferred to the museum, and guards were found dead, their bodies gruesomely torn apart, some parts missing. Even though the Peruvian full moon made the night almost as clear as the day, no one had seen anything. Curfew was determined, all

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schools, museums, institutes and the University were shut down and searched. A lot of people were arrested, with no result. Whispers of curses and haunted treasures spread fast.

In the late 1890s, negotiations are being made to try to reopen the excavations and continue the research on the ceramic artifacts. A lot of bone dust and dried blood has been cataloged and the English, Dutch and American scientists are trying to find a way to separate the samples and determine with accuracy how many people found their deaths in Huaca del Sol and Huaca de la Luna.

## Forbidden Lore

### The Three Gods from Abroad

The history of Huaca de la Luna starts long before its construction, in a place quite far and away: Britain. By the end of the 4th Century, the Romans left the British islands, leaving their lands open for barbaric invasions. These were dark times, lost in the mists, with little or no official record of anything, and legend flew along with history. This was the time of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, of Merlin the wizard, the Lady of the Lake and other mythical figures. Those were pages of bravery, war and magic, written with blood in the history of the British Lands.

Some of the barbaric hordes were infamous for their degraded practices, including cannibalism and necrophilia. Three tribes, in particular, were notorious among the others, not only for their large numbers, but also for their leaders. Their names are not known to history, but tales are told of the Berserker Warlord, a bloodthirsty warrior who could break bones with his bare hands; the Dark Druid, a corrupted defiler, said to change natural beasts and plants through foul magic, turning them into monsters; and the Blood Witch, a beautiful but wicked woman, highly schooled in the dark arts,

governing men through seduction, deception and fear.

These three understood the need for gathering large numbers against their enemies, and forged a long-last alliance against those who would defend Britain. Together, they raided villages and feasted upon the flesh and blood of hundreds of victims. When their own soldiers did not accomplish whatever task they assigned, they hunted down these "traitors and cowards" and executed them in the most horrible ways. Their leadership was unquestionable and remained unchallenged for years.

But eventually, their corruption reached levels too dark, even for their own followers. When their armies lost a battle against well-armed knights, some barbaric warriors took the chance to set them up and tried to kill them. The three barely managed to escape their own troops and made it to the sea with a group of faithful followers.

The ship they took was not well-prepared for long-term sea travel, though, nor had they gather enough supplies. A sudden current took the ship too far away from the British shores, pushing it ever farther south and west. In the meantime, they followed their own nature and began to murder and consume their own terrified acolytes. Even those horrific last-minute supplies were not enough, though, and the three eventually starved. They shouted curses at each other, at the sea and the dark skies. Something deep within the darkness heard their curses and challenges, for they slowly changed and grew stronger once again, yet their bodies dehydrated.

Their ship took a long route, always southbound, circumnavigating America, eventually reaching the Pacific Ocean after passing along Tierra del Fuego. When the ship arrived on Peruvian shores, the three were little more than skeletal frames clad in torn clothes and tattered armor. The local natives received the strange ship as an omen from the gods, and entered it to investigate. The three undead abominations immediately woke and jumped to attack.

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After slaughtering and consuming two dozen natives in a bloody frenzy, they left the ship and entered the first village they saw, walking proud among the shorter, terrified inhabitants. Soon they established a center of power and designed rituals to ensure their own survival without calling for a revolt against them.

They settled in a pyramid constructed with local architecture, but following the astrological designs given by the Blood Witch and the Dark Druid. Being undead, the lack of oxygen was of no concern for them. The Pyramid would be later known as Huaca de la Luna, for its obvious relationship with the moon. For some unknown contingency of time, the greatest manifestation of the "El Niño" occurred right after their arrival, with torrential showers after almost 50 years of extended dryness. The natives thought that they were benevolent, if somehow grim, deities, and gladly accepted them as rulers.

They took the mantle of divinity and ruled the natives through might and fear, but instead of calling for sacrifices, they adopted a more barbaric, warlike lifestyle, promoting combat competitions to the death every four years. This way, they ensured that any weak warriors would be quickly replaced, and also had plenty of flesh and blood to feast on. They kept this successful method for three full centuries. During that period, they managed to keep other civilizations at bay, and were even able to corrupt other people's faiths. Ancient nature spirits worshipped by their neighbors began to receive bloody sacrifices, because the other nations feared the Moche so much that they began to think that blood rites should empower their own spiritual guides. That only contributed to their spiritual weakening and corruption. One such case, the Snow Mother, a nature spirit who became bloodthirsty after the arrival of the Three Gods, was recently discovered by archeologists.

Under their command, the Moche flourished into a grand nation, based on the idea

that only the strong survived. Their highly competitive lifestyle contributed to their own demise, though. Soon other temples were built in far communities, eventually entering in contact with other civilizations. The cult of the Sun God was prospering all over Latin America, and his priests finally managed to set foot on the land, having Huaca del Sol built only one mile away from Huaca de la Luna, right in front of Cierro Blanco.

When the three terrible beings noticed that there was a rival cult rising against them, they immediately sent warriors against his enemies, but the followers of the Sun God were victorious. Then, the three themselves left their pyramid and fought, murdering almost a hundred people. Fortunately for their enemies, the same unknown power who had given the three their awesome powers had bestowed a powerful curse upon them: their tough bodies could not resist attacks made with weapons of pure gold. The high priests of the Sun God were able to drive the monsters away and mangle them badly.

While they were trying to recover from the combat, killing and consuming their own weakened subjects, their enemies descended upon them, tying them up with gold-laced ropes, and ultimately entombing them with golden vestments especially prepared to hold them. They were buried in their own palace, in an awkward order, contrary to their own hierarchy: the Blood Witch was buried on the top, the Berserker Warlord beneath her and the Dark Druid almost outside the pyramid, away from the circles of power he had helped building.

The pyramid was abandoned by the year 800 AD. For some time, the followers of the Sun God thrived and commanded the Moche civilization, but their own end was near. That final battle had dangerously weakened them, and the news about the fall of the gods rapidly reached the ears of neighboring tribes. The Moche were either driven away from their homes or killed, their once-large 14 cities over different valleys around Cierro Blanco were



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abandoned and plundered. All about them was almost completely erased from history.

When the three undead lords were entombed, they did not find peace, however. The golden traps prevented their spirits from leaving this world, and they entered a state of hibernation, becoming little more than well-preserved skeletons. As the three were recovered, transported to the museum in Lima and freed from their golden cages, they slowly emerged again and, as the full moon rose over their bodies, they woke up and found their way out, into the night.

## Current Sketch

Although the three undead lords have left the museum together and are still bound by their allegiance (now enhanced by their undead commonality) each one has its own private agenda. The Warlord wants to gather an army of ghosts and take over the local government; the Druid wants to return to Huaca de la Luna and, from that place, reestablish the trio's place of power over the region, waging war against any existing descendants of their enemies; the Witch wants to gather her own army of men and understand the new world around them, while maintaining her customary strategies.

Each one constantly repeats the same behavior they had when alive, and this might be the key for their destruction, once someone finds out what they are up to. Local qabals are aware of the "ancient evil" who emerged from the tombs (as some of the explorers were covert agents), but most do not know yet the magnitude of these creatures' powers and their potential for doing evil.

## The Berserker Warrior (The Warlord)

**Male Ghoul Lord, Bar6;** CR9, medium-size undead (6'10"); HD6d12; HP45; Init +3 (Dex); Spd. 40 ft.; AC17, touch 13, flat-footed 17; Atk +11/+6 melee (1d6+5, silver club) or +11/+11 (1d6+5, claws), +9 (1d4+2, bite); Face/Reach 5ft. by 5 ft. / 5 ft.; SA miasma, paralysis,

ravenous fever, create spawn; SQ undead, lunar regeneration, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked), turn resistance +2, vulnerable to gold; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 20, Dex 17, Con - Int 15, Wis 16, Cha 16;

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +14, Handle Animal +4, Intimidate +12, Intuit Direction +12, Jump +14, Knowledge (local) +4, Listen +6, Ride +8, Spot +6, Swim +10, Wilderness Lore +12; Alertness, Power Attack, Cleave

*Languages:* Celtic, 5th-century English, Moche, Spanish.

*Signature Possessions:* silver mace, silver chalice.

The Berserker Warrior is fury personified. He's a cunning and dirty fighter, always using whatever advantage he may have to win. He is also a ruthless, cruel brute who believes in nothing else but raw strength.

The transition to undead state did nothing to improve his wild appearance, but added to his intimidating figure. He is a towering man, with bluish skin tightly drawn over his massive muscles. His waist-long, blond hair is usually unkempt. In the pyramid he always wore silver scale mail, but now he wears no armor.

In Britain, he was the leader of the larger horde of barbarians, but agreed on the alliance because he knew all too well that he might depend on magic to win the endless wars. In Peru he was careful to never let any of his ghost servants exist for too long, usually tearing them apart and devouring their remains after a short period, to avoid any possibility of competition.

## Combat

The Berserker Warrior has lost his barbarian rage when he became undead, but he accepts it as the will of his dark gods, and believes the powers he gained in exchange were

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worth the loss. He has retained his fast movement and uncanny dodge.

**Miasma (Su):** see Denizens of Darkness, page 65. Will save DC 16 or suffer -4 morale penalty to attacks rolls, checks and saves.

**Paralysis (Su):** bite, Fort save DC 16 or become paralyzed for 1d6+6 minutes.

**Ravenous Fever (Su):** see Denizens of Darkness, page 65.

**Create Spawn (Su):** The Warrior never lets victims of his ravenous fever become ghouls. He lets victims of his physical attacks become ghosts, but usually destroys and consumes them after a few weeks.

**Lunar Regeneration (Su):** Through extensive rituals, these three ghoul lords share an unique connection with the moon, and regenerate damage when exposed to direct moonlight. This ability functions exactly as with a fledgling nosferatu vampire (see Denizens of Darkness, page 152).

**Vulnerable to Gold (Ex):** all three ghoul lords share a unique vulnerability, perhaps due to their connection with the moon and rivalry with the Sun God. Weapons made of gold cause double damage and their lunar regeneration cannot heal it. If encased in solid gold (at least 50 pounds), the creature cannot free itself alone, loses its lunar regeneration and rapidly decays to skeletal state.

Despite this vulnerability, gold weapons cannot kill the creature permanently. To do so, it is first necessary to destroy each creature's chalice in fire. After the chalice has been melted, the silver must then be blessed. Only after that can the creature be killed forever.

**Undead:** Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain or death from massive damage.

## The Dark Druid (The Birdman)

**Male Ghoul Lord, Drd6;** CR9, medium-size undead (6'); HD6d12; HP39; Init +4 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14; Atk +7 melee (1d6+3, silver shortspear) or +7/+7 (1d6+3, claws), +5 (1d4+1, bite); Face/Reach 5ft. by 5 ft. / 5 ft.; SA black thumb, miasma, paralysis, ravenous fever, create spawn, spells; SQ undead, lunar regeneration, nature sense, trackless, turn resistance +2, vulnerable to gold; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +9; Str 16, Dex 18, Con -, Int 15, Wis 19, Cha 17;

*Skills and Feats:* Animal Empathy +8, Concentration +8, Diplomacy +8, Handle Animal +8, Heal +9, Intuit Direction +8, Knowledge (local) +3, Knowledge (nature) +7, Listen +6, Scry +7, Spellcraft +7, Spot +6, Swim +8, Wilderness Lore +8; Improved Initiative, Combat Casting, Dodge.

*Languages:* Celtic, Druidic, 5th-century English, Moche, Spanish.

*Signature Possessions:* silver shortspear, silver chalice.

*Druid Spells per Day:* 5/4/4/3. Base save DC 14 + spell level.

The Dark Druid was once a defender of the forests, but decided to use the natural environment to his personal advantage and achieve more temporal power. For a while, he lost his spells, but then something has replaced his connection with nature, giving him renewed access to some druid spells. He can no longer cure wounds, summon or command normal animals, nor help plant growth, though.

While the Warrior is frightful for his physical powers, the Druid is a sinister figure, always wearing some animal mask and a heavy feathered cloak. No one, besides the other two, has seen his true appearance and survived.

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## Combat

The Dark Druid has kept his nature sense and trackless step abilities, but has lost his wild shape and animal companion abilities. Normal animals avoid him at all costs.

**Black Thumb (Su):** the Dark Druid has long lost his connection with nature, and has gained this ability, similar to the elven vampire's (see *Denizens of Darkness*, page 158)

**Miasma (Su):** see *Denizens of Darkness*, page 65. His aura is light gray instead of green. Will save DC 16 or suffer -4 morale penalty to attacks rolls, checks and saves.

**Paralysis (Su):** bite, Fort save DC 16 or become paralyzed for 1d6+6 minutes.  
**Ravenous Fever (Su):** see *Denizens of Darkness*, page 65.

**Create Spawn (Su):** The Druid never lets victims of his ravenous fever become ghoul lords. He lets victims of his physical attacks become ghosts, but usually destroys and consumes them after a few weeks.

**Lunar Regeneration (Su):** see the Berserker Warrior's description.

**Vulnerable to Gold (Ex):** see the Berserker Warrior's description.

**Undead:** Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain or death from massive damage.

## The Blood Witch (The Snake Lady)

**Female Ghoul Lord, Sor6;** CR9, medium-size undead (5'10"); HD6d12; HP33; Init +4 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14; Atk +4 melee (1d4+1, silver dagger) or +4/+4 (1d6+1, claws), +2 (1d4, bite); Face/Reach 5ft. by 5 ft. / 5 ft.; SA miasma, paralysis, ravenous fever, create spawn, spells; SQ undead, lunar regeneration, turn resistance +2, vulnerable to gold; AL CE; SV Fort +2 Ref +5 Will +6; Str 12, Dex 17, Con -, Int 16, Wis 13, Cha 22;

*Skills and Feats:* Alchemy +7, Bluff +10, Concentration +12, Craft (brewing) +7, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (local) +5, Listen +5, Scry +7, Spellcraft +6, Spot +5, Wilderness Lore +3; Alertness, Combat Casting, Spell Focus (Enchantment)

*Languages:* Celtic, 5th-century English, Moche, Spanish.

*Signature Possessions:* silver dagger, silver chalice.

*Sorcerer Spells per Day:* 6/8/7/4. Base save DC 16 + spell level, 18 + spell level for Enchantment spells.

*Sorcerer Spells known:* 0 - dancing lights, daze, detect magic, detect poison, light, mage hand, read magic; 1st - charm person, comprehend languages, mage armor, sleep; 2nd - detect thoughts, invisibility; 3rd - hold person.

The Blood Witch is an awesome image to behold, a once-beautiful, tall, red-haired woman. Her skin is white to the point of being almost transparent. Her eyes are perfect emerald green. She always dresses elegantly, wearing snakeskin as a skirt, along with feathers of various birds. Her clothes are constantly soaked in dried blood, though. She is still a seductress, having lost nothing of the lust she had when alive.

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## Combat

The Blood Witch shuns combat at all costs, always counting on undead servants and charmed men to do the job for her while she casts spells from a safe distance. Only if they fail to protect her will she engage a foe directly.

**Miasma (Su):** see Denizens of Darkness, page 65. Will save DC 19 or suffer -4 morale penalty to attacks rolls, checks and saves.

**Paralysis (Su):** bite, Fort save DC 19 or become paralyzed for 1d6+6 minutes.

**Ravenous Fever (Su):** see Denizens of Darkness, page 65.

**Create Spawn (Su):** The Witch never lets victims of his ravenous fever become ghoul lords. He lets victims of his physical attacks become ghastrs, but usually destroys and consumes them after a few weeks.

**Lunar Regeneration (Su):** see the Berserker Warrior's description.

**Vulnerable to Gold (Ex):** see the Berserker Warrior's description.

**Undead:** Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain or death from massive damage.

## Huaca de la Luna in the 1890s

The pyramid has been purged of most evil spirits during the aftermath of the battle with the Three Gods, but still keeps a potential for evil. The constant excavations every now and then open a new collective grave. Such places reek of evil, and the restless spirits of those whose bodies were torn apart still lurk in some places. They act very much as the guardian spirits of Huaca del Sol (see below). The entire pyramid is currently a rank 2 sinkhole of evil, but the presence of each of the three evil masters

raises the rank by +1 (that is, with the Three Gods back to their thrones, Huaca de la Luna would become a rank 5 sinkhole of evil).

## Huaca del Sol in the 1890s

Although Huaca de la Luna has been cleansed of any evil spirits by the shamans and priests of the Sun God, Huaca del Sol keeps its own dark secrets. The ghoul lords' "blood" (a smelly, sticky black ichor) spilled on the ground during the final battle defiled the ground. The sacrifices took a dark aspect.

These spirits were not strong enough to free themselves from the powerful corrupting influence of the blood. Being too weak to become individual ghosts and driven by the powerful emotions connected to the sacrifices, these residual spiritual energies took on a single, shapeless incorporeal body. They are doomed to remain close to Cierro Blanco and selfishly guard it against mountaineers and any others they see as trespassers. The large quantity of restless spirits make this place a rank 3 sinkhole of evil.

## Guardian Spirit

**Unique Undead:** CR4, large undead (incorporeal); HD 4d12; HP26; Init. +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd. fly 30 ft. (perfect); AC 14 (-1 size, +4 Dex, +1 deflection), touch 14, flat-footed 10; Atk +5 melee (1d6 fire, incorporeal touch); Face/Reach 5ft. by 5 ft. / 5 ft.; SA spectral fire touch; SQ undead, anchored, immunities, incorporeal, water vulnerability; AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +5 Will +5; Str -, Dex 18, Con -, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12;

*Skills and Feats:* Hide +17, Intimidate +6, Intuit Direction +5, Listen +14, Search +13, Spot +14, Wilderness Lore +7; Dodge, Improved Initiative.

The guardian spirits of Huaca del Sol form a collective entity, composed of several lesser residual life forces who gathered as the

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victims were pushed to their deaths in the cliffs, one after another. Each residual energy takes the shape of a small light, similar to a firefly.

## Combat

The guardian spirits aggressively attack anyone who approaches their cliff or comes to the top of Huaca del Sol without saying a respectful prayer. To their warped minds, anyone who does not offer prayers to the Sun God is to become its sacrificial victim. They surround and burn their victims with their incorporeal fire attack, trying to confuse her and make her fall.

**Spectral Fire (Su):** this is the guardian spirit's primary attack, an incorporeal touch which delivers 1d6 points of fire damage.

**Undead:** Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain or death from massive damage.

**Incorporeal:** can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, +1 or better weapons, or magic, with a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source. Can pass through solid objects at will, and own attacks pass through armor. Always moves silently.

**Anchored (Su):** the guardian spirit cannot move more than 100 ft. from the sacrificial spot, on the side of Cierro Blanco over the top of Huaca del Sol.

**Immunities:** the guardian spirits are immune to cold- and fire-based attacks.

**Water Vulnerability (Ex):** The guardian spirits are highly vulnerable to water. A vial of normal water deals 1d4 points of damage to the collective, 1 point per splash. Holy water deals 3d4 points of damage per vial, 3 points per splash. Rain causes 2d4 points of damage per round of direct impact. As rain is an extremely rare event over the Cierro Blanco, though, the guardian spirit has little to fear.





## LEAD INTO GOLD

### ALCHEMY IN GOTHIC EARTH

By: Stephen C. Sutton  
(ScS)

New Alchemical  
permutations discovered  
by the alchemist Nicolas  
Flamel

In the 14th century, there lived a scribe by the name of Nicolas Flamel. Flamel was a frugal man; he never dreamed of accomplishing anything greater than producing copy after copy of ancient manuscripts. Though Flamel might have been a dull man, he lived in an exciting time. All over Europe occultists, philosophers and scientists laboured to unlock the secrets of alchemy. Nicolas Flamel knew almost nothing of alchemy when he first laid eyes upon the Book of Abraham; nonetheless, he was destined to unravel the mysteries that eluded so many others.

Flamel discovered the book while searching through a market for ancient manuscripts to reproduce. Some say that he was guided to the book by a divine dream. To everyone else who examined the book, the pages were blank. Yet to Flamel the pages appeared to be inscribed with a strange language that he could not decipher. From the moment he first laid eyes upon the eldritch symbols he was hopelessly obsessed. Instantly, he dedicated his life to deciphering the mysterious runes and learning the secrets they held. Flamel bought the book and spent years copying it and trying to decipher the symbols. Flamel traveled across Europe, showing copies of the pages to anyone who might possibly decode the writing. Eventually he traveled to Spain and took his book to a synagogue, where Jewish scholars taught him the meaning of the ancient symbols.

By the time Flamel left Spain he was armed with the key to unlocking the enigma.

At this point in time, the history of Flamel becomes sketchy. Even the most trustworthy accounts become riddled with speculation and conjecture. Flamel lived in obscurity, though it is alleged that before he disappeared he had uncovered the secret of distilling silver from iron, transmuted lead into gold and even became immortal. Neither his body nor that of his wife was ever recovered, and their home was thoroughly ransacked by their neighbours. For centuries after his death alchemists searched for his wondrous book, though all that was ever discovered were the copies of random pages that Flamel had made during the first years of his quest. Occult sources cite numerous instances in history where Flamel was rumoured to have been spotted. Sources as late as 1860 claimed that Flamel and his wife had opened an Opera in Paris, purchasing the building with pure gold ingots. Speculation aside, there has never been any evidence to suggest that Flamel had succeeded any better than the countless fools and frauds that characterized the dead profession of alchemist.

The lack of evidence notwithstanding, the works of Nicolas Flamel are the most sought after relics in alchemy. The numerous pages he copied from his wondrous book still circulate amongst collectors and historians throughout the world. Flamel was nothing if not an excellent scribe, and it is believed in his lifetime he must have manufactured as many as four copies of the Book of Abraham, each one identical to the original text. These copies are fragmented, since Flamel sent out countless pages to intellectuals and scholars during the first years of his studies. The fragments recovered from Flamel's correspondence hold amazing knowledge for those who study alchemy. Even incomplete

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copies may yield amazing clues to unlocking the primal forces of nature.

Below is just a sampling of the knowledge that was contained in Flamel's book. Each of the formula includes a cost for the raw materials and the minimum monetary value that must be spent on the equipment involved in the creation of the alchemist's laboratory. The raw materials are consumed in the creation process, but the lab equipment remains intact. Lab equipment used for one formula can also be applied to other formulae, provided the lab equipment is equal or greater value needed to synthesize the other formula.

## The Philosopher's Stone

The search for the philosopher's stone is the beginning of quest of alchemy. The stone itself is a metaphor, dating back to the beginnings of humanity. The legends vary based upon religion, but all state that the stone represents the divine gift given to mankind by its creators. The stone represents mankind's ability to think, to reason, and to imagine. It is the stone that separates humanity from the animals; it is the stone that gives humanity the ability to control the forces of the universe.

Most people only possess the stone in its most crude state; they can reason and think and even dream, but their minds are trapped within the confines of the physical world. These humans are trapped within the veil of illusion that makes up the known universe; they perceive the rules of physics as absolute and unchanging. These beings are incapable of seeing the world as it truly is; until they can uncover the stone within them they will never accomplish true alchemy.

There are also those who strive to see beyond the illusion of nature, those who push themselves to discover the true boundaries of reality. These individuals are said to have "distilled" the philosopher's stone; they have purified their creative essence and are capable of seeing the elastic nature of the physical world.

Once awakened into this higher state of being, these "philosophers" are capable of invoking true alchemy.

### **Philosopher's Stone** [General]:

Prerequisites: Int +13

Effects: With this feat a character may begin taking alchemical feats.

Special: This feat counts as an item creation feat.

## The Search for Eternal Life

There is nothing more feared by alchemists than time itself. The search for knowledge is a long journey, and human beings live such short lives. Alchemists are forever searching for a way to push back the clock, to buy more time for themselves to uncover the secrets of alchemy. While most of humanity hopelessly search in vain for a fountain of youth, an alchemist has the potential to actually succeed in his quest for immortality. The copied pages of the lost Book of Abraham describe aging in a manner that contradicts all other texts on the subject of immortality. While most texts suggest that aging is the result of a loss of life force, in contrast the Book of Abraham ascribes the effects of aging to the collection of impurities in the body. Several pages recovered from the lost book describe a technique for cleansing the human body of such impurities, lessening the effects of aging. It is rumoured that experienced alchemists have refined these techniques of purifying the body, and have devised a technique to reverse the aging process.

### **Temporal Contaminant Inhibitor** [General]:

Prerequisites: Int +13, Philosopher's Stone, Brew Potion

Formulation: DC 25, 24 hours, \$25 raw materials, \$50 lab equipment

Effects: The impurities acquired through aging are bound to the inhibitor and are rendered temporarily benign. For twenty-four hours the subject no longer suffers from the age based penalties to his strength, dexterity and



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constitution scores. After 24 hours the penalties reassert themselves.

Partial Formula: Only one of the physical abilities (strength or dexterity or constitution) is relieved of the penalty. The reduced effects of the formula only functions for six hours.

## **Temporal Contaminant Purifier** [General]:

Prerequisites: Int +14, Philosopher's Stone, Brew Potion, Temporal Contaminant Inhibitor

Formulation: DC 30, 48 hours, \$50 raw materials, \$75 lab equipment

Effects: The impurities acquired through aging are bound to the purifier and are completely flushed from the body. The subject's body reduces in age exactly one year. This reversed aging may reduce penalties to physical abilities, but it does not remove the age-based bonuses to intelligence, wisdom and charisma. Any one subject can only ingest one dose of formula in one 24-hour period, or else gain no benefit and instead suffer 1D6 temporary constitution damage.

Partial Formula: The purifier is poorly synthesized and will not remove the effects of aging. In fact, the purifier dissolves healthy tissue, dealing 1D6 points of damage for every one point by which the alchemy check to synthesize the formula failed.

## **Elixir of Life** [General]:

Prerequisites: Int +17, Philosopher's Stone, Brew Potion, Temporal Contaminant Inhibitor, Temporal Contaminant Purifier

Formulation: DC 33, 48 hours, \$150 raw materials, \$500 lab equipment

Effects: The elixir completely flushes the body of aging impurities. The body of the subject reverts to its earliest mature state. Over the course of an hour the subject's body reverses the aging process. In human subjects the body continues to grow younger until reaching an approximate age of twenty years. The effects of the potion are immediate, but once the subject has reached the final age, he begins to age naturally once more.

Partial Formula: The purifier is poorly synthesized and adheres to healthy tissue as well as age related impurities. As both the pollutants and tissues are dissolved, the victim appears to become younger and younger. The effects of the elixir work rapidly, in only a minute the subject is reduced to the age of an infant. After that, the subject's body can no longer function. In only two minutes after ingesting the faulty elixir the subject dissolves into a puddle of slimy water.

## Lead into Gold

Of all the wild fantasies of alchemy, nothing is more celebrated than transmutation. Throughout history alchemists gained funding for their research by promising their patrons the ability to transmute base metals into precious materials. The history of alchemy is littered with the bodies of the frauds who claimed to possess this most famed secret of alchemy.

The Book of Abraham was fabled to hold the secrets of transmutation, and if Flamel's copied fragments can be believed, it truly did. Of the copied pages available to the public, only a few even allude to transmutation. It is not difficult to imagine a reason for some collector to hold back pages that hold more explicit information. The lost book describes an account of a dialogue between a mortal man believed to be Abraham and some undefined divine spirit. In the dialogue, the "spirit" describes the three permutations of transmutation. The process described is not a simple formula for turning base metals into valuable ones, but rather it is a series of metaphysical principles that allow an alchemist to devise formulae which ultimately allow the transmutation of any substance into any other substance.

The first permutation of transmutation is the degeneration of complex materials into simple ones. The basic theories outlined in the pages offer alchemists the potential to create a formula that can be used to separate alloys into their basic requirements. The next permutation described in Flamel's lost book offers the exact opposite effect. This formula can transmute a

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simple substance into a much more complex substance. The principles of both of these formulas are necessary in the completion of the third permutation, true transmutation. With the third and final formula, an alchemist gains sufficient knowledge of the mutation process to create a formula that will transform any one substance into any other substance.

## **1st Degree Transmutation [General]:**

Prerequisites: Int +14, Philosopher's Stone, Brew Potion

Formulation: DC 25, 12 hours, \$20 raw materials, \$35 lab equipment

Effects: A single dose of the formula can affect a maximum of ten pounds or three cubic feet of material. A single application of the formula requires nothing more than the substance to be directly splashed, from that point the transmuting potion works its way throughout the substance. Over the course of ten minutes, the complex substance is broken down into its basic components. Steel degenerates into layers of iron and carbon, glass releases oxygen gas and melts into a puddle of basic silicon and stone degenerates into a sandy dust made up of many elements. Organic material is too complex even for the transmuting potion to dissolve, so bone, flesh and wood are completely immune to the potion. Any inanimate object made of a complex material such as steel, glass or stone is either destroyed by the formula, or develops a hole where the potion struck. This potion could be used to separate small quantities of valuable metals from alloys or rock impurities, though such valuable metals will not be produced in any higher quantity than was already present

Partial Formula: A partial failure indicates that the potion can transmute a maximum of one pound, or three cubic inches of material.

## **2nd Degree Transmutation [General]:**

Prerequisites: Int +16, Philosopher's Stone, Brew Potion, 1st Degree Transmutation

Formulation: DC 27, 24 hours, \$40 raw materials, \$150 lab equipment, one sample of the finished material.

Effects: A single dose of the formula can affect a maximum of ten pounds or three cubic feet of material. A single application of the formula requires nothing more than the substance to be directly splashed, from that point the transmuting potion works its way throughout the substance. The formula requires the addition of a small sample of the complex substance into which the bases substance is to be transmuted. Should the potion be directly applied to a material that is one of the basic components of the desired complex substance, the potion becomes active. Over ten minutes the material transmutes into the complex substance. With an application of the potion iron could be transmuted into steel or rust, seawater could be turned into hydrochloric acid, or even beach sand turned into glass. Organic materials appear to be too complex to be created using this potion. To the great chagrin of greedy alchemists valuable gems cannot be created by applications of the potion to sources of carbon. Neither can the formula create sizable quantities of gold or silver, since these are in reality very basic substances.

Transmuting a finished product into a more complex substance can have a variety of consequences. Transmuting an iron sword into steel would result in the creation of a steel blade; where as transmuting the same iron weapon into rust would destroy the sword.

Some alchemists have been known to use the second degree of transmutation to create substances containing valuable metals, and then using the first degree of transmutation to separate the synthesized valuables. To be sure, this process offers very little return since the raw materials for such actives cost a total of \$60 not counting the basic substance already consumed in the first transmutation of the process. To coerce gullible patrons into funding more

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research, devious alchemists used this procedure for untold centuries.

**Partial Formula:** A partial failure indicates that the potion can transmute a maximum of one pound, or three cubic inches of material.

## **True Transmutation [General]:**

**Prerequisites:** Int +18, Philosopher's Stone, Brew Potion, 1st degree and 2nd degree Transmutation

**Formulation:** DC 33, 12 hours, \$50 raw materials, \$300 lab equipment, a small sample of the desired substance and a sample of the substance to be transmuted

**Effects:** A single dose of the formula can affect a maximum of ten pounds or three cubic feet of material. A single application of the formula requires nothing more than the substance to be directly splashed, from that point the transmuting potion works its way throughout the substance. The potion will only produce the transmutation effect upon the basic substance that was used in the synthesis of the potion. Likewise, the potion will only transmute that substance into an equal amount of the desired substance. Both the basic and the desired substance must be chosen at the beginning of the synthesis of the potion, and once chosen they cannot be changed.

With this formula, any number of miraculous transformations can be accomplished. Coals can be turned into tiny diamonds, glass could be turned to steel, rock can be turned to quartz crystal and of course, lead can be turned to gold. Organic materials cannot be transmuted with this formula, nor can they be produced by the formula.

**Partial Formula:** A partial failure indicates that the potion can transmute a maximum of one pound, or three cubic inches of material.



## PHARAOH AKHENATON

### THE HERETIC OF TEL EL-AMARNA

By: Midge Wesley and  
Dion Fernandez (Of Midway  
Haven)

In Gothic Egypt, the  
relentless sun and the  
shifting sands rule  
supreme. Within its  
desert heart, however, a  
quest that has spanned  
millennia may finally  
find resolve under the  
leadership of an ancient  
heretic  
king.

Seemingly for the first half of Gothic Earth's history, Egypt ruled the world. It was a universe apart from Greece and Rome: the exotic, mysterious land out in the amber wastes, where geometric monuments of yellow stone and gleaming rock towered over the endless sands below, built to honor a multitude of gods and their human viceroys. It was the Greco-Roman cosmos turned upside-down: the kingdom of Heaven on Earth.

This beauty, however, deceives the feeble eye. Ever since the priest Imhotep unwittingly allowed the Red Death entrance into this world, the majesty that was Egypt intermittently gave way to decadence, avarice and human exploitation. The once-pure worship of the true gods turned into a pageant for the wealthy. Soon enough, the Egyptian gods themselves were losing their foothold on this world, fighting an uphill battle against the unseen evil that took Gothic Earth as its own.

Blinded by the Red Death and its minions, the fruitless worship of the gods continued unnoticed by the humans below.

Somewhere in Egypt lies a little-known ruined locale natives have called Tel el-Amarna. On the surface, nothing is left of this center but a few carved stones and brick foundations, but beneath the burning sands and barren bluffs of this ancient city lies the legacy of defiance that has endured for thousands of years.

Once, the land now known as Tel el-Amarna was the center of the world. Where lifeless rocks now stand there flourished a majestic city, ruled by a pharaoh who defied the corrupted old ways of Egypt's theocracy. Years after this enigmatic king's death, his enemies sought to blot out his name from the ranks of the god-kings; history would later call him "The Heretic of Tel el-Amarna." Yet, three thousand years after his brief reign, Pharaoh Akhenaton still continues the daunting task brought forth to him by his solar god.

### Pharaoh Akhenaton

**Male 4th-Rank Ancient Dead, Clr10: CR 15;** Medium-sized undead; HD 10d12; hp 87; Init -1 (-1 Dexterity); AC 23 (-1 Dexterity, +14 natural); Atk. +7/+2 melee, +5/+2 slam (2d6+6); SA Fear, Aton's Touch, Call of the Qabal, Turn/Rebuke Undead; SQ Symbiosis, Turn Resistance, Damage Reduction 20/+2, Fire Immunity, Pure Casting, Rejuvenation; AI N; Save Fort +7, Ref +3, Wil +7; Str 15, Dex 9, Con--, Int 13, Wis 17, Cha 16.

*Skills and Feats:* Concentration +8, Diplomacy +8, Gather Information +7, Heal +8, Knowledge (forbidden lore) +5, Knowledge (religion) +10, Knowledge (Red Death) +3, Listen +12, Perform +4, Scry +5, Spellcraft (spiritcraft) +8, Wilderness Lore +4; Alertness, Create

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Wondrous Item, Extra Turning, Leadership, Scribe Scroll, Track.

*Cleric Spells per Day:* (6/5/5/4/4/3). Base DC = 16 + spell level. Deity: Aton. Domain: Sun (automatically destroy turned undead 1/day).

*Languages:* Ancient Egyptian, Arabic, English, Latin, French, Spanish, Mandarin.

## Appearance

All that remains of the once-regal Pharaoh Akhenaton is a frame tightly wrapped in yellowed strips of linen. The linens however expose his lower left hip, exposing a nest of spiders living inside his mummified form. Trinkets of burnished gold glorifying the god Aton adorn his shoulders and his arms. Covering his face and head is an elaborate death mask made of gold and red bronze. When the pharaoh wishes to venture out into the desert, he always wears his large, flowing red cotton cowl making him look imposing in the arid and windy landscape.



(drawing by Dion Fernandez)

## Background

Pharaoh Amenophis III was a wise king who ruled from Egypt's capital Thebes. He, however, was the pawn of the high priests of Karnak, minions of the Red Death. They saw to it that the aging god-king continued promoting the fruitless worship of gods shielded forever from their devotees.

The pharaoh's eldest son was groomed to become the next pharaoh, an intelligent, albeit eccentric, young man with a keen eye and an open mind. Every morning he would follow his deified father into the great temples, hailing the celestial gods: the great sun god Ra, the benevolent Nile god Hapi, the unseen wind god Amun, among others in a seemingly endless list. Already, in his tender age, he began to doubt if ever the gods still listened to their followers.

## Whispers in the Morning

His answer came one cold night as he lay asleep. The young prince was awakened by a soft red light that bathed his room. He turned to look for the source of this most unusual illumination, finding a disk of light hovering just outside his window. The circle of light introduced itself to the prince as Aton, last link of the divine gods to Egypt. This new deity taught the prince all he needed to know: of the folly of his ancestor Imhotep, of the Egyptian gods alive and well, clouded by an unknown evil force that acted as a barrier, keeping them from reaching their followers. That night the prince was given a divine mission: to lead Egypt and the known world as pharaoh out of this evil taint, no matter what the cost.

The prince eventually ascended the throne in 1350 BC as Pharaoh Amenophis IV. But the mission given to him was clear: if this unseen evil was to be removed, he and his kingdom must start anew. Defying the ancient rituals handed down for generations, he changed his holy name to Akhenaton, the Face of Aton. Following the directions given to him by his

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solar deity, he abandoned decadent Thebes and the Temple of Karnak to found a new capital out in the desert, free of evil's blotch.

## Aton's Glory

Somewhere in the barren wilderness east of the Nile River, Akhenaton founded Egypt's new capital Akhet-Aton, Aton's Glory. Taking his wife Nefertiti and his family into the new city, the king ordered the corrupted, rigid structures of the old ways liberalized. He reversed the kingdom's entire warlike policy by abandoning efforts to extend or even maintain Egyptian power outside the Nile valley; as such Egypt stopped being imperialistic and aggressive. By royal decree all of Egypt's polytheistic temples were closed, with the king knowing that worship of the gods was fruitless. In their place Aton, the one true living god, was glorified. Within the short span of four years, in 1346 BC, the pharaoh's new capital gleamed like a jewel in the desert.

Meanwhile Thebes was crumbling, as Akhenaton planned. Funding for maintenance of the Karnak Temple was cut, all diverted to Aton's Glory. A mystical barrier somehow prevented minions of the Red Death from penetrating the new city and destroying the pharaoh, but what they could not do in distance they would achieve in time and propaganda.

The teachings of Aton did not have a concept of an afterlife, which was an integral part of Egyptian spirituality; Akhenaton believed that his solar god would provide a new afterlife world in place of the old, useless one. The priests of Karnak manipulated this flaw in the pharaoh's teaching to lure back followers into Thebes, into the old ways and eventually into the hands of the unseen evil.

Slowly, Akhet-Aton was abandoned, leaving the heretical pharaoh alone in his palace in the desert. When finally Akhenaton died in 1332 BC, still devoted to the sun god Aton, the title of Capital was returned to Thebes and the ways of the old gods returned. Akhet-Aton was

ransacked of its wealth and torn of its grand, imposing structures until all that remained were a few mounds of earth and broken stone walls. His name was removed from the Book of Eternal Life, and his visage chiseled out of walls and statues, all to rectify the "tarnished legacy" of Egypt's glory. In the sacred Valley of the Kings, zealots tore into Akhenaton's tomb and defiled the mummy within.

## Herald of the Red Sun

But in life the eccentric pharaoh was wise; he had told his devoted followers to hide his mummy in a secret catacomb deep under Akhet-Aton, and to present a decoy in the sacred Valley. He knew that his sacred quest to rid the known world of the unseen evil would continue even beyond his personal extinction.

Indeed, within five years of his death, Akhenaton arose as one of the ancient dead, resurrected by his devotees. For the most part he stayed out of history's way, watching as Egypt rose under Ramses and fell under Cleopatra. He sent devoted followers out into the world, to watch, to gather knowledge and to spread the saving word of Aton, as the unseen evil slowly yet viciously spread its influence into new and exotic lands.

After countless lifetimes, in the final years of the 19th century, Ottoman Egypt no longer holds title as the center of the world; however, its people all submit to the will of one true God and his Prophet. But the pharaoh knows his quest to rid Egypt of the Red Death is not complete. Deep within the barren valley of Tel el-Amarna, Akhenaton's agents still amass knowledge, confident in the belief that someday, the will of Aton and his undead messenger would bear lasting fruition.



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## Current Sketch

Pharaoh Akhenaton has gained sufficient knowledge of the world around him and the unseen power that holds sway over it. Since his awakening as one of the ancient dead three thousand years ago, he has never left the small valley of Tel el-Amarna, fearing the taint of the Red Death. He contents himself with the fact that his followers scour the world for knowledge about this unseen evil, returning periodically to ancient Akhet-Aton to give him what he desires. His goal still remains clear: through the power of his god Aton, the last link of the ancient Egyptian gods on earth, he seeks to restore Egypt's former glory free from the Red Death's clutches. Though the Red Death itself knows well of Akhenaton's nature and motives, the pharaoh has so far eluded attempts to be totally corrupted.

The pharaoh's followers have called themselves the Synod of the Crimson Disk. It is their duty to serve Akhenaton and his wills, even if most of them have never really seen the undead king themselves. Like so many other qabals, they travel the world scouring for knowledge and forbidden lore, but their main priority is to spread the saving word of Aton. None of the qabalists know of Akhenaton's true motives to defeat the Red Death.

Unknown to many who know the pharaoh, Akhenaton's corruption has already begun. He has failed to appear to his subjects, appearing only seven times in the last hundred years. A growing obsession to defeat the Red Death and to restore Egypt's grandeur feeds at king day by day. Recently, he has discovered that he could command a person anywhere in the world simply by his own thoughts, an ability he finds both delightful and frightening. Only time will tell if Akhenaton would succumb to the unseen power or continue on with his divine quest.

## Combat

Unlike most other pharaohs of ancient Egypt, Akhenaton was never a warrior but a priest devoted to a new, saving god. He has never in his life (or unlife) resorted to violence as a way to solve problems, but if faced with no other option he would use his clerical powers to defeat his enemies.

As a king he still has his subjects; the Synod of the Crimson Disk will never hesitate to defend their king in times of need.

## Special Attacks

**Fear (su):** The mere sighting of Akhenaton's ancient form causes everyone within a 50-foot radius to make a Will Save (DC 16) or be paralyzed with fear for 2d6 rounds.

**Aton's Touch (su):** In place of the traditional mummy rot, Akhenaton's touch can inflict a supernatural disease that drains body moisture in 1d4 days. On the first day after touch, the dehydration causes chronic fatigue that makes spellcasting and combat impossible. On the second day the victim's skin becomes dry and seemingly parched; drinking fluids will not rectify his predicament. Each day after the first that the character lives, he permanently loses 2 points of Charisma and 1 point Constitution. Recovery from this disease requires one cure disease spell for every day the disease has persisted, and they must all be cast within a 24 hour period. After the spell has been cast lost abilities are regained at a rate of 1 point a day. If this supernatural disease takes its course without action, the victim dies drained of all body fluids. Though this ability is granted by the sun god Aton, using this causes Akhenaton to make a powers check.

**Call of the Synod (su):** Pharaoh Akhenaton can mentally project any thought to any member of the Synod of the Crimson Disk, regardless of wherever that person is anywhere in the world.

**Turn/Rebuke Undead (su):** Akhenaton can turn or rebuke undead as a 10th-level cleric.



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## Special Qualities

**Symbiosis (ex):** Akhenaton's mummified innards are home to a small nest of large spiders (each 2d10 hp).

**Turn Resistance (su):** Pharaoh Akhenaton's ancient form has +3 turn resistance.

**Pure Casting (su):** The tenuous link between Akhenaton and his sun god has provided a source of magic other than the Red Death. As long as Akhenaton does not use his clerical spells for evil purposes his power checks are halved.

**Rejuvenation (su):** Akhenaton can rejuvenate 6 hp per hour after resting for one day. He is helpless while rejuvenating and must rest for one more day once healed.

## Tel el-Amarna

Somewhere on the east banks of the Nile Valley near Thebes is Tel el-Amarna, a seemingly uninhabited outcropping of desert rock and sand. The intense heat of the desert prevents most from ever entering this parcel of land, but once in Egypt's history Tel el-Amarna was Akhet-Aton, the spiritual center of the Egypt. Here the mummy Akhenaton still holds court in underground caverns to a handful of devotees and Synod members.

Tel el-Amarna is one of only a few places on Gothic Earth where the Red Death does not yet completely hold sway. As such, spellcasters in Tel el-Amarna can cast spells with power checks halved, as long as these spells are not used for evil purposes.

## The Synod of the Crimson Disk

### A Lawful Neutral Qabal

The Synod of the Crimson Disk was founded by Akhenaton himself, shortly after Akhet-Aton was sanctified. When Thebes reclaimed the title of Egypt's capital in 1332 BC, those who remained true to the teachings of Aton gathered together beneath the ruins of Akhet-Aton and resurrected their leader as one of the ancient dead. As well as gathering information, the qabal's primary function is to reestablish pharaonic rule in Egypt and around the Mediterranean by spreading the tenets of Akhenaton's solar religion. Though the nerve center functions in the caves beneath Tel el-Amarna, the Synod has chosen cosmopolitan Cairo as a more accessible base of operations. There are also smaller branches existing, specifically in Mexico City, London, Manila and New York.

## Membership

The Synod is basically familial in nature; many of the Qabal's members are direct descendants of Pharaoh Akhenaton's first true followers. However, people with eccentric views and open minds may be approached by members themselves. Since much of the qabal functions at a secretive missionary level, it is no surprise that the majority of its members are Mystics.

Throughout the generations only men and women of Middle-Eastern stock were accepted into the ranks of the Synod; however in much more recent times Pharaoh Akhenaton has approved the entry of a few Caucasians and Asians, devoted to spreading the teachings of Aton.

## Symbol

All Synod members wear a trapezoidal burnished gold trinket etched with the symbol of Aton. This symbol depicts the sun as a red disk from which diverging hairbreadth-thin beams

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radiate downward, each ray terminating in a human hand. This suggests a divine power issuing from a celestial source, the sun, that puts its hands upon the affairs of the world. The small trinkets are constructed in such a way that they could be worn as earrings, pendants or any other such decorations.

## Activities

The Synod swears fealty to Pharaoh Akhenaton, even if many members have never been to Egypt much less seen the king. They gather information relevant to what Akhenaton desires, sometimes not even knowing what to look for or for what end their actions may bring. Synod members work diligently, patiently and quietly to satisfy their leader's needs, responding only to the whispery voice that calls inside their minds, reaching to them from the parched heart of Egypt.

Every four years Synod members trek to the wastes of Tel el-Amarna to present their work to Pharaoh Akhenaton. Though the pilgrimage to ancient Akhet-Aton is not mandatory, members are encouraged to visit Tel el-Amarna at least once in their lifetime. With centuries of knowledge stored beneath the sands of Tel el-Amarna, Akhenaton patiently awaits the day when he could cleanse Egypt clean of the unseen evil and reestablish Heaven on Earth.

## Adventure Ideas

### ◆ Queen of the Sun

Aside from proselytizing and gathering information on the world around him, Pharaoh Akhenaton also has another goal in mind: finding the remains of his wife Nefertiti. This beautiful queen was Akhenaton's true love in life and was his most active supporter in spreading Aton's word, but she passed away two years before his own death. When the Red Death's minions plundered Akhet-Aton and the Valley of the Kings, they secreted away her mummy. Nefertiti's corpse has ever since

then proved an elusive prize for Akhenaton and the Synod. It is the pharaoh's true wish that his wife be beside him in the forthcoming battle against the unseen evil.

In 1893, archaeologists excavated a small cavern near Deir el-Bahri, containing a sarcophagus bearing the inscription of Nefertiti. Three days after the discovery, three lead archaeologists are dead and the sarcophagus is nowhere to be found. All leads point to a secret society based in Cairo, but the Synod has denied killing the researchers or stealing the coffin. The characters are called in to hunt the murderers and locate the stolen mummy, encountering dark magic and intrigue along the way. It is left to the characters whether to return the sarcophagus to the Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities or to deliver it into the hands of Akhenaton's Synod.

Within 2d8 days of the crime, Nefertiti's disturbed mummy may rise up from the dead. Her awakening could send mystical repercussions throughout Egypt, attracting the attention of no less than the heretical pharaoh himself.

### ◆ Horemheb's Vengeance

Pharaoh Horemheb took the throne of Egypt after Akhenaton's death. It was he who ordered all references to his predecessor and his god blotted out of Egypt's history, thereby initiating a wave of chaos that resulted in the destruction of Akhet-Aton and the eventual desecration of the Valley of the Kings.

With the presence of Akhenaton, Horemheb himself could not sleep quietly in his grave. As such, he too has arisen from the grave as one of the ancient dead, hoping to stop Akhenaton from fulfilling his heretical plans. Though weaker in power than Akhenaton, Horemheb has nevertheless amassed a formidable group of assassins known as the Chisel Wielders, a qabal whose sole purpose is to destroy the

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heretical pharaoh and his Synod. The characters must intervene to stop an impending war between two ancient rivals, a war that may define the future of Egypt.

## ◆ Infiltrators

The archaeological and spiritualist craze of the 19th century has drawn countless visitors into Egypt, seeking the "forbidden lore" of the ancients. It comes to no surprise as droves of people start to descend upon Tel el-Amarna. Soon, visitors to this secluded place begin to have terrible

experiences such as snakebites, nightmares, unusual skin diseases and extreme dehydration. Most may attribute these to some sort of "mystical curse," but one of the characters knows it definitely is something else. The characters are faced with an option: either help the pharaoh and his minions drive the visitors out of Tel el-Amarna and leave them in peace, or to help the visitors exorcise the barren valley of the "source of the curse."



## THE SNOW MOTHER

### A CORRUPTED SPIRIT IN THE HEART OF THE GOTHIC ANDES

By: Luiz Eduardo Neves  
Peret  
(Lord Arijani)

The tale of a nature  
spirit turned evil by  
defiling rituals, naively  
intended for its  
spiritual strengthening.

#### Introduction

Of all darkness spread by the Red Death upon the world, one of the most horrible cases is that of a nature spirit corrupted through the use of equivocated rituals and worship, originally intended for its own development and the advancement of its powers to battle evil. It is an irony that the same ones who are trying to help a source of natural magic are responsible for its fall into the bottomless pit of evil. The Red Death need not even interfere directly, relying on the misguided ways of some ignorant humans to do its job.

There is one such unfortunate tale in the Andes, regarding the Snow Mother, an once pacific local entity who wanted little from her followers, but has become an ever-demanding, bloodthirsty and vengeful power.

#### A Treasure Vault in the Heart of the Andes

When several European expeditions tried to find what the Spanish talked about hundreds of years before – El Dorado, the City of Gold – they usually met little more than ancient burial grounds, broken items, frozen corpses and a few jewels. Some, more

unfortunate, met with a cold death in the snow-capped peaks, or felt the crushing blow of stone and earth from the unstable terrain.

However, in the late 1890s, some expeditions managed to find more and more clues of the extension of the Inca Empire upon South America, from north of Peru and Bolivia all the way down to southern Chile. While some groups tried to uncover the mysteries of civilizations who had vanished before the Incas arrived, others focused on learning how the Incas had absorbed those civilizations, and how they had used the local traditions and know-how to the glory of their empire.

Not very far from the hidden city of Machu Pichu, a number of caves were found in the summer. The instability of the mountains prevented further exploration, but it was clear that some of those caves were either manmade or were natural caves used by the Incas, or somebody else, as mines.

Deep inside one of the highest mountains, there was a sacred place of worship, dating back more than a thousand years. It could only be reached after one traveled a whole day through a very dangerous path along the border of an unstable cliff. Snow falls year-round, and avalanches are very common. An ancient bridge of petrified wood leads to the entrance of a cave, which might pass for a natural hole, if not for a single marking over the entrance, a barely-visible female silhouette.

When a group of explorers first spotted the bridge, after a minor earthquake, the local guides were visibly terrified. They adamantly refused to go any further, babbling things about a vengeful Snow Mother who would punish anyone who dared enter her cave without showing proper respect and making sacrifices. Of course, this did not shake the adventurers and they went inside anyway. Their guides went

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back into the nearest village, and waited. Almost one week later, only one survivor returned, maddened and frostbitten. He was still able to whisper incoherent words about “gold in the snow and a beautiful she-god clad in gold and surrounded by monsters”, before life left his body.

Several expeditions tried to find the way back to the cave, but most failed. Due to constant tremors, parts of the way around the cliffs normally go up or down a few feet every now and then, and passages appear out of nowhere, while others are permanently buried under snow and stone. However, the legendary Cave of the Snow Mother was not the only place where treasures were to be found. Other caves guarded weapons, tools and fine pottery. Some were peacefully awaiting those who would find them, some were filled with death and misfortune.

The tale has spread throughout the scientific community and among adventurers all around the world. Legends of golden artifacts and tools brought back by those who found their way there and back, histories of pain and madness, tales of curses and monsters, of the dead coming from the snow to hug the living in a cold embrace. Some locals say the place is haunted, while others still pray to the Snow Mother, the guardian of the highest mountains, a deity older than the Inca cult of the Sun God, and whose sect survived Spanish colonization. In the 1890s, almost every villager in the highest and coldest parts of the Andes quietly whispers a pray to Her, asking for Her forgiveness when a new group of adventurers climbs up, trying to find Her holy chamber, and humbly offering those same adventurers as sacrifice, so that, when they die in Her cold embrace, She will leave the nearby villages in piece, will stay Her hand for one more year, and will not threaten them with avalanches and snow storms.

Recently, a number of unusual corpses have been found right after avalanches. The dried, frozen bodies are almost always of teenage boys and girls, found with little clothing covering their bodies, sitting or crouched, with nothing to bind their arms or legs, a perpetual

smile frozen in their desiccated faces. The “smiling mummies” were naturally embalmed by dry coldness, and they were apparently placed somewhere high on the mountains, almost naked, yet smiling in the face of a terrible, freezing death. Scientists are uncertain of how they came to be there, and why they were visibly happy in their final moments, as if fully accepting their fate with joy.

## FORBIDDEN LORE: Those Who Remain Unnamed

Centuries before the Inca Empire flourished, a number of isolated nameless civilizations divided the Andes and neighboring regions among themselves, each one either battling the others in wars of conquest or trying to remain as isolated as possible. Each tribal group and clan had a totemic ancestor as guardian or worshipped a nature spirit, linked to some particular element, natural feature or place. Several fey spirits were regarded as gods and protectors, receiving offerings in food and clothing, and sometimes in blood, in exchange for good crops, good hunting, and protection, either against their worshippers’ enemies or from natural disasters that were so common. While some such spirits had little to do with their supplicants, a few actually were involved in several aspects of human life.

Chiefly among these, the Snow Mother ruled from her holy chambers in a hidden cave. Originally a minor local fey, she more than once protected humans from the rigors of winter and from foreign enemies, and they began to render her deference by paying tribute, both on Midwinter, to ask her for a mild winter and a joyful spring, and on Midsummer, to ensure that the next winter would not be their last. The first offerings were a share of the best crops, then jewels and ceramic from the best artisans. Later on, as decades passed, other tribal groups started to pay homage to their gods in a more gruesome fashion, making sacrifices of animals, and then humans.

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The Snow Mother accepted the first offerings with curiosity, then she grew used to receiving presents. Once, for some unknown reason, her devoted followers did not send the usual gifts to her in the two annual holy dates. She responded in accordance, sending a minor earth tremor to ensure that her followers came back on track. This only added to their fear and awe, and they quickly reestablished worship, but this time in an unique fashion.

On Midsummer, the local leaders would pick a handful of the healthiest and most handsome adolescents of both genders, then separate them to perform a special rite. On the next Midwinter, they would organize a grand parade to send the Chosen Ones to meet their goddess. The boys and girls, heavily drugged to remain unaware of the extreme coldness around them, were seated on benches and lifted above the crowd's head, then carried to the Cave of the Snow Mother among cheers and chanting. Once inside the Cave, the youngsters would have the final honor of meeting with their goddess in person and commune with her before death finally took them.

The Snow Mother found this rite interesting and curious. She was aware that those young men and women were doomed to die there, but she thought they were willingly offering themselves as a proof of respect and devotion. Also, while they were still alive, she was able to converse with some of them for a short period, even though their minds were confused and blurred. She never thought of the true meaning of those encounters, and believed that the people wanted to keep her company, shielding her from loneliness.

Soon enough, she became almost addicted to such encounters, longing for the next Midwinter, when she would meet new, joyful Chosen Ones. She eventually evolved her power to keep them alive for a little longer, and after a few generations she managed to reanimate their corpses as guardians and companions. They no longer talked to her in their new state, but she was not alone.

Then, after a long while, a few miles away from the Snow Mother's sanctuary, the Moches erected their Huacas to worship their new deities, the Three Gods from abroad (read more about them in "Huaca de la Luna"). Their practices were barbaric and blood-shedding, routed on fear, rage and basic instincts rather than love and respect. The Snow Mother heard of their rituals from the winds and from animals who witnessed them happening. She was appalled, but was confident that her own people were safe.

But that did not hold true. The Moche Empire became more and more hostile, eventually invading the neighboring lands. The Snow Mother felt that blood was running deep in the earth, and she sent a couple of avalanches and earthquakes to prevent the enemies from advancing. She even managed to send a few of her undead servants to do battle against the invaders. That terrorized the Moche people, who fled and reorganized. For several years, there was peace, as long as the Moche were too busy conquering other clans and tribes. The so-called Three Gods never showed their faces beyond the borders of their own realm, and she was not afraid of them.

However, the cultural influence of the Moche was strongly felt in the region: the Snow Mother's worshippers, fearing that the Three Gods might be stronger than she was, and believing that blood was their source of power, began to sacrifice victims to her instead of sending them alive. She was shocked and confused when she perceived the blood flowing from her own followers' hands. She withdrew her beneficial powers and let them suffer with an earthquake to teach them a lesson. This weakened them, and while the bloody sacrifices were stopped for a while, some of them mistakenly believed that the earthquake had been a result of the Snow Mother's declining powers over the land, not a direct message from her. Because of this, some secretly continued with their gruesome sacrifices, subtly contaminating her spiritual essence, while the majority of the population returned to their old ways.



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## The Incas

Years later, with the end of the Moche Empire, it seemed that peace had returned. That was when everything changed, though. The Incas came, conquering, absorbing or destroying everyone on their way, spreading their cult of the Sun God with bloody sacrifices and cannibalistic rituals. They dismissed the Snow Mother and tried to take over the land, but a deadly earthquake taught them a lesson on respect.

A few Inca explorers, who dared to come and settle, quickly incorporated a new deity to their sun-centered religion. While the Sun God was revered by the whole Inca nation, here, away from their big cities, it was the Snow Mother who ruled. They mixed their own practices with the Snow Mother's worshipping rites and the corrupted rituals. This way, her cult survived, but it was forever changed, just as She was.

The Snow Mother became totally addicted to bloody offering, and she finally understood the meaning of her previous encounters with the Chosen Ones. She still received a handful of such boys and girls per year, but she demanded that, in addition to them, at least one human sacrifice had to be made in the ghastly Inca style. She became fully evil, a powerful force of nature strengthened in her destructive aspects but severely weakened in her original connection to the land.

## The Arrival of the Conquerors

When the Spanish came, first with sweet words, then with cannons and guns, the Incas had little chance of survival. As they failed to send sacrifices to the Snow Mother, minor tremors abounded in the region. These tremors prevented the Spanish from approaching her cave in large numbers, and the few who came were quickly dealt with, either by her worshippers or by her undead minions. She accepted some of the newcomers as her sacrifices and new companions. The enslaved

natives would sometimes appease her by telling some European legends of her treasures and then giving some information about the position of her hidden cave, in the hopes that their slavers would become offerings. This kept the cult alive for generations. As with other local slave religions throughout America, some of the Catholic locals associated the Snow Mother with an aspect of the Holy Virgin and secretly prayed to her during services.

## The Snow Mother in the 1890s

Legends still abound about the Cave of the Snow Mother, its uncountable riches and unspeakable horrors. Adventurers, thieves and explorers alike have lost their lives trying to find the holy chambers. Those who are not crushed by earthquakes or buried by avalanches usually meet their fate in the smiling mummies' cold embrace. Only a few humans have ever seen the true face of the Snow Mother in the last century or so; of these, perhaps less than a handful left her cave alive, and even less reached civilization with coherence enough to say anything of value to others. This only adds to the appealing mystery of the place and the greed of more adventurers.

## The Snow Mother

**CR16; SZ Medium-size Fey (cold, earth)** (6ft. tall); HD10d6+40; HP 74; Init. +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd. 30ft.; AC 22 or 27 (+2 Dex, +10 natural, +5 gold "armor"), touch 12, flat-footed 20 or 25; Atk. +7 melee (1d6+1 cold touch plus extreme frostbite) or +6 melee or +7 ranged (1d4+1/crit 19-20/x3, +1 frost dagger); SA command frost mummies, earthquake, extreme frostbite, spell-like abilities; SQ cold subtype, earth mastery, metal mastery, stonewalk, DR 10/silver or +2, SR14; AL NE; SV Fort +11, Ref +4, Will +9; Str 12, Con 18, Dex 14, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 22.

*Skills and Feats:* Animal Empathy +11, Balance +7, Bluff +11, Climb +6, Concentration +10, Diplomacy +14, Escape Artist +8, Handle Animal +8, Hide +8\* (+18), Intimidate +13,



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Jump +7, Knowledge (nature) +8, Listen +9, Move Silently +7, Scry +8, Sense Motive +7, Spot +9, Use Rope +7, Wilderness Lore +7; Alertness, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse (touch).

\* When not wearing her gold adornments, she receives a racial +10 bonus to Hide inside her cave.

*Signature Equipment:* +1 frost dagger, several golden adornments.

*Treasure:* double standard: 15% coins, 65% gems, 20% art and items. The overall value found remains the same, but the scarcity of coins is due to the nonexistence of coins until the arrival of the Spanish conquerors. Split the remaining value in the percentages given above.

## Appearance

The Snow Mother resembles an exotic, beautiful, female human-like statue made of semitransparent, bluish-gray crystal. In darker areas she appears fully solid, but when light crosses her body it is possible to see through it. Her eyes, fingernails and hair are stark white. This appearance helps her hide in her snow-capped, crystal cave (see skills).

The Snow Mother, however, rarely is seen in this form. When meeting petitioners and “potential live offerings” (usually explorers or enemies), she wears as many of her golden adornments as possible. She usually appears wearing a golden tiara encrusted with yellow and red gems, resembling a rising sun (a gift from her Inca worshippers), a pair of golden bracers on her arms and similar pieces on her ankles, at least a dozen of smaller armbands, a pair of large, semicircular golden earrings, a dozen golden necklaces that fit one into another forming a large semicircular piece, and two loose pieces of clothing, made of intertwined gold rings, covering her breasts and from her waist down to her knees. She uses gold and bronze and, sometimes, other metals, but never silver.

The Snow Mother understands and can speak the language of her first, unnamed worshippers, Inca, the local dialect and Spanish.

## Lair

The Cave of the Snow Mother is a large natural complex of caverns, riddled with tunnels and with access to mining galleries deep underground. The Snow Mother rests in the central area, protected by a legion of frost mummies. The entrances to the Cave are discreetly guarded by local inhabitants. It is possible that the central cave might be reached through a secondary tunnel or a mine, and in such case the initial trespassing would go mostly unnoticed by locals.

In her inner chamber, the Snow Mother admires her treasures and observes the world immediately around her. She has a pool of clear water from a subterranean source, which she can use three times per day as a crystal ball. No one knows whether the Snow Mother can leave her cave and, for as long as anyone remembers, she has never done it. In times of dire need, she is known to have been to the most external hall of her complex, in order to activate her Greater Earthquake power on a neighboring mountain or on the valley below (see below).

## Combat

For generations, the Snow Mother has almost never faced any opponent in melee combat. She usually relies on her servants and powers to get rid of intruders who are not considered offerings. Only when threatened she will fight, either with her +1 frost dagger or, if trying to turn an opponent into a potential offering, with her freezing touch.

**Spell-like abilities:** at will – Endure Elements (cold only); 3/day – Speak with Animals, Sleet Storm; 1/day – Ice Storm; 1/week – Earthquake. These abilities function as the spells of same names, cast by an 18th-level druid. Saves, if applicable, have a DC of 21.

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**Command Frost Mummies (Su):** The Snow Mother can automatically command all Frost Mummies within 100ft.

**Greater Earthquake (Su):** Once per year, she can summon a much more powerful and deadly version of the Earthquake spell, as cast by an 18th-level druid, with doubled range (2,240ft.) and area of effect (180-foot-radius), with the duration of a full minute (ten rounds). She must concentrate in order to maintain this power, but she is not required to roll a Concentration skill test due to the violent motions caused by the spell itself. The Snow Mother saves this power for moments of greatest need, as when their worshippers are attacked by enemy hordes. Usually, the intensity of the earthquake is more than enough to start a chain reaction that results in a sequence of larger tremors, which last for several minutes and provoke unthinkable disasters. Her inner chamber is never subject to the detrimental effects of this specific power, although it can be targeted by her lesser earthquake spell-like ability.

**Earth Mastery (Ex):** The Snow Mother gains a +1 attack and damage bonus if both her and her foe are touching the ground. If an opponent is airborne or waterborne, she suffers a -4 penalty to attack and damage. Additionally, she is never required to make a Concentration check due to the violent movement caused by an earthquake or similar tremor.

**Metal Mastery (Ex):** Metallic weapons of any kind (except silver) suffer a -1 penalty to attack and damage when used against the Snow Mother. This modifier should be included before applying damage reduction. Also, when wearing her golden adornments, she benefits from an armor bonus equivalent to that of chain mail, without suffering any armor check penalty, as if she were naked.

**Extreme Frostbite (Ex):** any creature successfully touched by the Snow Mother must make a Fortitude save (DC19). A failure means that the creature suffers frostbite, receiving additional 1d6 points of subdual damage. The creature is considered fatigued until all subdual damage is removed. A creature that falls

unconscious due to the subdual damage caused by the Snow Mother's touch attacks begins to receive 1d6 points of normal, cold damage per round until dead. Creatures killed by this effect become frost mummies at the end of 1d4 days.

**Stonewalk (Su):** As a standard action, the Snow Mother can merge with solid stone, ice or snow at will. This ability is similar to the spell Merge with Stone, except that the Snow Mother can move freely through the stone at a speed of 20ft. and can remain merged indefinitely.

**Cold Subtype:** Immune to cold, suffers double damage from fire-based attacks, except of a successful save, if applicable. In the case of a successful save, suffers half damage.

**Frost Mummy ("Smiling Mummy")** CR3; SZ Medium-size **Undead**; **HD 4d12+3**; HP 29; Init. +3 (-1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd. 20ft.; AC 17 (-1 Dex, +8 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 17; Atk. +7 (1d6+5 plus 1d6 cold, slam); SA aura of confusion, disease, frostbite; SQ undead, cold immunity, fire vulnerability, DR10/silver, rejuvenation, turn resistance +2; AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +6; Str 20, Con -, Dex 9, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 14.

*Skills and Feats:* Balance +3, Climb +17, Hide +11, Jump +9, Listen +16, Move Silently +11, Spot +16; Alertness, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Toughness.

*Treasure:* 50% standard (gems and adornments only).

Frost mummies are made of the dried and preserved corpses of the Snow Mother's chosen ones, and of those explorers and enemies she has also turned into undead minions with her extreme frostbite ability. They usually had no armor prior to the transformation, and use no weapons, but most wear golden adornments similar to those of their leader. They apparently have no memory of their former lives and exist solely to protect and serve the Snow Mother. Most frost mummies have a perpetual smile on their dried faces, an effect of the blissful mental

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state they experienced, under the effect of herbal drugs, prior to a cold death by exposure and frostbite.

**Combat:** Frost mummies rely on their powerful fists to crush opponents. They are known to operate in teams using basic combat tactics. They try to avoid fire at all costs.

**Aura of Confusion (Su):** frost mummies do not generate supernatural fear. Instead, anyone who sees a frost mummy for the first time must make a Will save (DC 14) or suffer the effects of the confusion spell for 2d4 rounds. Regardless of the result of the saving throw, the creature cannot be affected by the aura of confusion of the same frost mummy for a day.

**Disease (Su):** Anyone hit by the frost mummy's slam attack must make a Fortitude save (DC14) or be infected by a supernatural disease. Incubation one day, damage temporary 1d4 Dex. This disease can only be cured by magic.

**Frostbite (Ex):** The slam attack of the frost mummy causes 1d6 additional points of cold damage. Also, besides the risk of disease, the opponent must make a Fortitude save (DC14) or suffer the effects of frostbite, receiving additional 1d6 points of subdual damage. The affected creature is considered fatigued until the subdual damage is removed.

**Rejuvenation (Su):** The frost mummy can rejuvenate 6hp/hour. It must fully rest for a whole day before rejuvenation takes place, and must stay inert for another full day after it has ended.

**Undead:** immune to poison, disease and death-based attacks. Not subject to critical attacks, subdual damage and death from massive damage. If brought down to 0hp, the frost mummy can no longer rejuvenate; it melts away and is destroyed.

**Fire Vulnerability (Ex):** The frost mummy receives double damage from fire-based attacks. If the attack allows a save, the mummy receives normal damage if successful and double damage if failed.

## Adventure Hooks

The Snow Mother may be a major opponent in a gothic "Raiders of the Lost Ark"-styled treasure hunt adventure, or she may play an important part in an uneasy alliance against the Three Gods, who may return to the area of Huaca de la Luna to rebuild their long lost empire."



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## THE WHAETELYS

By Andrew McDermoth  
(Drinnik Shoehorn)

IDLENESS: A model farm where the devil experiments with seeds of new sins and promotes the growth of staple vices.

Ambrose Bierce (1842 - 1914), *The Devil's Dictionary*

Families are important.  
Some families are big,  
some small. There is one  
family that is huge in  
its infamy. The latest  
crop have raised their  
heads, and they are just  
as bad, just as cruel and  
just as repulsive as  
others of their kin. This  
family has a name, and  
that name is Whaetely

USS Editor's comment: While this submission was made especially for the MotRD setting, we can see interesting developments for the Whaetely family if located in an isolated place of the Core ...

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"Jefferson Whaetely! You come 'ere!" Pa Whaetely stood on the rotted porch of the Old Whaetely house. "We got visitors! You shouldn't be in that there field! Youse knows your mother needs help when we's got guests!"

A large man dressed in denim dungarees walked away from the field he was ploughing by hand. He walked towards the house, the hot sun

beating down on him. "Bah gra. Tra gol pna!" He said, pointing forlornly at the field.

"I's don't care! Visitors give us money, fool! Does ye want me to burn ya again?" Pa wheezed.

"Na ba! Na ba!" Jefferson shook his hands in front of his face. "Na ba, gra."

Pa turned to the young, terrified couple behind him. "So sorry. My son is a bit slow." Pa turned back to Jefferson. "You lout! We should have drowned you at birth! Youse is worthless!" He hit the man with his cane.

"W-we don't want to be any trouble," the young man behind Pa said in an English accent, "we can manage ourselves."

"Jefferson Whaetely knows his place, doesn't he, boy?" Pa squinted at the blubbering man.

Jefferson nodded. For the first time the couple got a good look at Jefferson's face. The woman screamed, the man let out a "Good God!" A scar ran from the back of Jefferson's head, over his right eye and to the corner of his mouth. The wound looked fresh and had dried blood smeared around it. Jefferson's left eye was not fixed on the couple. It was constantly moving, as if Jefferson could see something, but it kept moving out of his sight.

"You poor man." The woman leaned over to touch Jefferson's face.

"I wouldn't do that, madam." Said a female voice. "Young Jefferthon doeth not like being touched. He'th very particular about that." The woman turned. Standing behind her was a short woman wearing simple farm clothes of browns and greens. A large shawl covered her head.

"Yes. Anyway, Mr...?" Pa started.

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"Cookson."

"Cookson? Anyway, Mr Cookson, Jefferson has had to live with that injury for a while. He'll take your suitcases to your room and I'll..." he was interrupted by a wail from the basement. A young woman ran up from below the house. She was plain looking and wore the same clothes as the woman who had offered the advice about Jefferson, except her face was not hidden. She was attractive, and Mr Cookson could see that she obviously knew this.

"Pa! Lil' Isiah has..." she stopped, looked at the couple and started again, "The dog downstairs is doing it again."

"What? What's the... er... dog doing this time?" Pa looked at the girl. "And this better be serious, Arabella. Youse knows what happens to girls that tell stories."

"Yes, Pa." Arabella nodded. Pa followed the girl downstairs, leaving the Cooksons with Ma and Jefferson.

"Jefferthon! Get thethe baggage'th up to the guetht room!" Ma looked at the Cooksons. "Thupper ith at half eight." She indicated Jefferson with her head. "He'll thow you to your room."

That night the Cooksons lay in bed. "I'm scared, Alfred." Mrs Cookson turned to her husband. "I don't like this house, I don't like this family and I want to go back to England!"

Mr Cookson turned to his wife. "It is alright, Barbara. They are just Americans doing American things, probably. We'll be gone in the morning, so it is only for one night." With that he rolled over and fell asleep.

Mrs Cookson was not convinced. She looked out of the window, surprised that it was still in one piece. She had warned her husband about staying in this dilapidated house. The walls where bare, there where no doors downstairs and there was sand all over the place. There where boards missing on the outside of

the house, leaving gaping maws in the walls and only a handful of windows had glass.

She looked at her husband. He was fast asleep. Her stomach grumbled and, not for the first time that night, she wished that she had not passed on supper.

Mrs Cookson crept out of bed and down the stairs. She searched the bottom floor of the house, but the kitchen was bare of food and there was nothing of interest anywhere. A sound came from the basement. She looked at the door. Again the sound came, again and again. It sounded like a soft breeze. She reached out for the door handle. As her hand closed around the cold metal a noise from outside made her jump. A meow told her it was a cat, even if the sound did sound muffled. A wet thump came from outside. Mrs Cookson froze. Again the thump sounded.

Slowly and cautiously, Mrs Cookson sneaked towards the window. Another meow started, but this one was cut short by a soft, wet, silken sound. As quietly as she could Mrs Cookson looked out of the window. She saw, sitting in a circle of blood, the man known as Jefferson. In one hand he had a knife, in the other a kitten. In one movement he brought the knife through the kittens body. Something uncoiled from inside the cat. Jefferson inserted his finger into the cut and pulled. The kitten's tender skin tore and its organs slipped into Jefferson's lap. Happily he licked his finger clean. He reached into a sack next to him and pulled out another kitten.

Mrs Cookson put a hand over her mouth and pulled away from the window. Her entire body shook. She looked around for something to drink. She found a jug of water from supper. It had gone warm in the hours it had been left to stand. She lifted the jug and drank from it. Cautiously she looked out of the window again. Jefferson was just sitting there, staring at the bodies strewn about him.

The noise came from the basement again. She turned and looked at the door. Mrs Cookson put the jug on the counter and walked towards the door. As quietly as she could she

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opened it. Stairs lead to the basement. Mrs Cookson took a deep breath and descended.

White sticks of some kind where scattered about the room and red symbols covered the walls. They all seemed to point to a sack. Mrs Cookson realized that the noises where coming from this sack. She gathered her nightskirts about her and made her way towards the sack. When she was about ten feet away, two slits opened near the top of the sack. Mrs Cookson saw the eyes. They were large, yellow and looking at her. Another slit opened further down Lil' Isiah squealed and started whispering. Mrs Cooksons screamed. She clutched the sides of her head and fell to her knees. Then everything went black.

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"Sse's coming round." A voice said, "Good, the's not dead."

"Pity, nosy bitch, come on Jefferthon! Get that thing over here!" Ma shouted to her disfigured son.

Mrs Cookson opened her eyes. She was in the basement, attached. Jefferson had Mr Cookson slung over his shoulder. Her husband was there as well. "You, you monsters!" she shouted.

"Yes, very original. We've been called worse, haven't we Ma?" Pa chuckled.

"Many different thingth." Ma turned. She was not wearing her shawl. Her face was horribly twisted. She had a harelip, which showed off some of the most decayed teeth Mrs Cookson had ever seen. Ma rubbed her nose, a nose that could be considered beautiful if Ma had a septum and better complexion.

Jefferson slung Mr Cookson on the floor in front of Lil' Isiah. Ma pulled a long, curved knife from the folds of her dress. She bent over Mrs Cookson's husband and sliced at his left hand. She handed Pa Mr Cookson's wedding ring, then placed his ring finger in Lil' Isiah's mouth. The thing chewed noisily, slobber

dripped from its mouth. Blood oozed from the corners and mingled with the drool. Mrs Cookson tried to move, but the girl called Arabella pushed her back down.

Ma placed more of Mr Cookson's flesh in Isiah's mouth. It chewed hungrily and growled for more.

Mrs Cookson began to cry. "Why? Why are you demons doing this?"

"Demons? Us? No, no, my dear. We's are not demons, just faithful servants. Youse serve your god, don't youse? I's can see by that crucifix youse got 'round your neck." Pa pulled it off. "We's serve our god, and he will reward me, I's mean, us with unimaginable power." Pa cackled. "Lil' Isiah is just more reliable than this." Pa spat on the cross.

Mrs Cookson looked at her husband. Ma had already stripped his body of most of its flesh. Mrs Cookson sobbed. "Our Father, who art in Heaven..." she began.

Ma stood and walked towards her. The woman looked up. She did the only thing she could. Barbara Cookson screamed.

## INTRODUCTION

No one was more influential to the Horror literary genre than Howard Phillip Lovecraft. In his story 'The Dunwich Horror', he created a family which did not capture the imagination as such, rather the Whaetelys' caused the mind to conjure up pictures of the most depraved people. Obviously the family appeared in the game Call of Cthulhu, and now has entered Shane Hensley's Deadlands. But why would the Red Death pass up the chance to have such a perfect addition of followers to its fold?

Until now the Whaetely family on Gothic Earth has been ignored. Feared by most, they now rear their faces and scream "This is us, we are part of your world whether you like it or



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not!" And they do this from the family farm in the countryside of the state of California.

Five members of the Whaetely's are charted here: Pa Whaetely, Ma Whaetely, Jefferson Whaetely, Arabella Whaetely and Lil' Isiah Whaetely. Each has a part to play in the macabre farm that serves as their home. There may be more of the Family scattered around Gothic Earth, but people pray not.

## Pa Whaetely

**Male human 8th level commoner/4th level wizard;** CR11; medium-size humanoid (human); HD 12d4+3; HP 41; Init: +2 (Dex); Spd. 30ft.; AC12 (+2 Dex); Atk +6 melee (1d8, pitchfork, or 1d6, shovel or sickle) or +8 ranged (1d6, axe); SA spells; SQ hiding skills; AL LE; Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +8; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 9, Int 21, Wis 15, Cha 7.

*Skills and Feats:* Alchemy +7, Concentration +7, Craft (Blacksmith) +11, Gather Information +4, Hide +2\*, Handle Animal +11, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (Arcana) +7, Knowledge (Farming) +11, Knowledge (Dark Rituals) +6, Listen +9, Profession (Farmer) +11, Ride +11, Scry +7, Spellcraft +7, Spot +5, Swim +3, Use Rope +11; Combat Casting, Endurance, Leadership, Toughness (x3)

*Wizard Spells per Day:* 4/5/3. Base DC = 15 + spell level.

*Spellbook:* 0 – arcane mark, light, mending, prestidigitation, resistance; 1st – alarm, burning hands, mage armor, true strike, expeditious retreat (always prepared); 2nd – blur, hypnotic pattern, locate object, pyrotechnics, scare, shatter.

*Languages:* English, French, Italian, Navaho, Portuguese, Russian; Pa also reads Aramaic, Greek, Hebrew, Spanish, Latin, Hindi, Flemish and German

Pa Whaetely is a short man who has reached his sixties. He is wiry and walks with a bow-legged gait. His snow-white hair is cropped short and his bushy white eyebrows are often

curved into a frown. His brown eyes are so dark that they seem black. His face is crisscrossed with scowl lines, especially around the corners of his mouth. When Pa speaks, it's rarely below a shout. Pa has a problem pronouncing "-sh"; it either comes out as "-ss" or "-th".

He always dresses in tweed waistcoats and brown trousers and is often seen haranguing Jefferson in the fields around the farm.

## Background

Pa Whaetely has traveled a lot in his life. As a youngster, he suffered from paranoia, therefore he never used his real name, always resorting to aliases. Pa always had a deep interest in the occult and was always investigating the truth behind local stories about wizards and suchlike.

Pa's skill with languages comes from his several travels and he can read so many due to all the ancient tomes he has read during the researches he has done over the years. In these tomes he found a few tales and legends pertaining to dark, ancient and powerful entities. Perhaps, during his studies, he might actually have found references to the Red Death itself, therefore letting its corrupting influence touch his already deranged mind. Whatever the case, Pa searched for more information on dark rituals as though he was infected with some form of fever.

The arcane guided Pa's 'career' and guided him subtly towards certain conclusions and made him even more feverishly excited about it. Pa was completely under the dark arcane thrall by the age of 25, until Ma came onto the scene. Pa was smitten with Ma and began to neglect his duties to the dark arcane. The Dark Arts also interested Ma, and she became more dedicated to its "cause" than Pa.

Pa and Ma finally decided to settle down and raise a family dedicated to the Dark Arts as much as they themselves were but, unfortunately for them, things did not go according to plan.



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## Current Sketch

Pa has always tried to teach the Dark Arts to his children, but now time has crept up on him and his plan to sire the next generation of devotees has failed. Because to this, Pa is a very bitter person. Due to his studies, he has developed some magical talent himself, and he delights in using these spells to torment the children he sees as failures, except Arabella. He knows something about Arabella that could help him.

Pa is currently trying to figure out what went wrong with his plan. All of his children were fine, except for Lil' Isiah. Arabella and Jefferson were model devotees when they were young, but then Arabella had her 'accident' and Jefferson started mutilating the animals and drawing all the time. Pa thinks that he should have another child and he has begun to think that Ma is impure. Currently he sees Arabella as a potential 'host' for the next generation and is waiting to see if it is not an 'accident' after all.

## Combat

Pa usually hides behind Jefferson if combat erupts. If this is not an option he unleashes any offensive spells he has and then flees as fast as possible. If forced to fight he uses any thing that comes to hand. He is quite inventive and can use any farm tool as a weapon without penalty. The statistics above offer a few options using farm tools as weapons.

*Skills:* Being a paranoid, absolute coward, as well as a master of deception, Pa receives a +8 circumstance bonus to his Hide skill when confronted in his farm. In other places, this bonus drops to a +2.

## Ma Whaetely

**Female human 6th-level adept; CR5; medium-size humanoid (human);** HD6d6+18; HP 45; Init +0; Spd. 30ft.; AC10; Atk +1 melee (1d3-2 subdual unarmed attack and energy drain) or +3 ranged (1d4-2 dagger); SA divine spells, energy drain, sphere of doom; SQ alternate form; AL CE; Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +9; Str 6, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 9, Wis18, Cha 5.

*Skills and Feats:* Concentration +5, Heal +9, Spellcraft +4, Wilderness Lore +2; Empower Spell, Maximize Spell, Silent Spell, Still Spell, Brew Potion.

*Languages:* English, French.

*Divine Spells per Day:* 3/3/2. Base DC = 14 + spell level.

Ma Whaetely is older than Pa by about 10 years, but she has twice his vitality. She spends most of her time indoors, where she sits throwing pieces of bark, assorted leaves, twigs, snake skins, animal parts and her own hair into a small pot that is hung above the kitchen stove. She says that she can read the future and the minds of men from this pot, but this may just be a tall tale.

Ma is short, shorter than Pa at least. She always wears a brown woolen skirt and a brown cotton blouse. Her skirt is protected by a pinafore that is always kept impeccably clean. A navy blue kerchief always covers her head. Her face is rarely seen, but when it is it shocks most people. Her eyes are deep set and are surrounded by black lines. Her nose is small and perfectly formed, except that her septum is missing. She has a harelip and lisps as she speaks. Her teeth are of a yellow-green color and it is surprising that they are still in her mouth.

## Background

Ma was a beautiful girl when Pa first met her, but after he introduced her into the dark incantations, things began to change. She studied it with fascination while using her

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knowledge of the wilderness to brew foul, lethal poisons.

Various pacts with dark entities and sinister reading have caused Ma to become the wretched thing she is today. Her power grew with each new deal, bringing her more and more abilities, but almost costing her more than she was willing to give.

Ma had always been proud of her looks, her strength and intelligence. Not arrogantly proud, but content in the knowledge that she knew more than some and was stronger than some. These things were taken from her, but she reasoned that she had Pa and did not need them anymore.

Mysterious entities from Beyond the Veil have taken an interest in Ma. Several of these Entities want Ma's soul, but so far they are all content to give her the power she craves.

## Combat

Although physically weak, Ma has been granted special and deadly powers from her dealings with mysterious entities.

**Energy Drain (Su):** Ma's touch has become similar to that of a wraith or spectre. With a successful touch attack she inflicts three negative levels. The Fortitude save to remove a negative level has a DC of 16.

**Alternate Form (Su):** As a standard action, Ma can assume the form of a fiendish snake of a dire rat at will. This is similar to a polymorph self spell cast by an 8th-level sorcerer, except that she may remain in either form indefinitely.

**Sphere of Doom (Sp):** Once per day, if she concentrates for four full rounds, Ma can create a ball made of pure negative energy, a gift from the Mysterious Entities from Beyond. This ball functions as a sphere of annihilation (see the DMG), except that no one can take control of it from Ma and the ball lasts only five rounds. Once the ball appears, Ma can control it as a free

action. In the round the sphere disappears and the round immediately after that, Ma is stunned.

## Arabella/ Greta Whaetely

**Female human 3rd-level adept (Arabella) or 1st-level rogue (Greta);** CR2 (1); medium-size humanoid (human); HD 3d6+3 (1d6+1 as Greta); HP 21 (7 as Greta); Init. +3 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd. 30ft.; AC 13 (Dex), Atk +3 melee (1d3+2 subdual unarmed attack) or +2 melee (1d4+2 dagger) as Greta; +4 ranged (none) or +3 ranged (1d4+2 dagger) as Greta; SA spells (sneak attack +1d6 as Greta); SQ personality shift (plus fear of silence as Greta); AL NG (LE as Greta); Fort +2, Ref +3 (+8 as Greta), Will +6 (+2 as Greta); Str 14; Dex 17; Con 12; Int 5\* (15 as Greta); Wis 14 (10 as Greta); Cha 6 (17 as Greta).

\* If Arabella is taken away from her family and educated, her Intelligence score may rise to 11)

*Skills and Feats* (as Arabella): Alchemy +3, Concentration +3, Scry +4; Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Iron Will.

*Skills and Feats* (as Greta): Balance +4, Decipher Script +4, Disable Device +4, Forgery +4, Open Lock +4, Perform +2, Pick Pocket +4, Read Lips +4, Spot +2, Swim +4, Tumble +4, Use Rope +4; Improved Initiative, Iron Will.

*Languages:* English (Greta can also speak French and German)

*Divine Spells per Day:* 3/3. Base DC = 12 + spell level.

Arabella and Greta are actually one in the same person. Arabella was physically beaten from a young age by both of her brothers and parents. She was treated like an animal throughout her childhood. Part of her hated herself and her parents for what they had done. It raged inside her head screaming at her to do something. Eventually that part of her psyche was given sentience by failed dark rituals and a foul brew. She has specific orders not to hurt anyone in her family and not to let herself get known.

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The alter ego named itself Greta. It is far more intelligent and charming than Arabella, but it is jealous of her spellcasting abilities.

The body that houses both Greta and Arabella is a waif of a girl. She is pretty in a dull sort of way when Arabella has control. Arabella's upbringing left her with no social skills, so she is uncouth when around other people, hence her low Charisma score. Greta, however, has learnt that manners pay off and can be the most charming of people.

Greta and Arabella cannot choose to be in control of the body, it happens when one of them is more emotionally charged than the other. They can communicate inside the body's head and they share memories.

When Arabella is in control of the body she dresses in the same style as her mother, often wearing her castoffs. When Greta is in control she wears men's clothes for ease of movement. Greta constantly hums when she is in control of the body because she is scared of silence. For years she was not given a voice inside Arabella's head and now that she is 'real' she is terrified of going back to non-existence.

## Background

At 16 years old, Arabella is the youngest of the Whaetely children. She had a terrible childhood at the hands of her family, which led to Greta's existence. Arabella started to believe in her father's teachings about black magic and was trained by her mother in the ways of the adept, but she always had doubts. When Greta was given sentience, Arabella was glad. Greta told Arabella that she would do the believing for both of them. Arabella continued under the tutelage of her mother and became more skilled. Greta would control the body during all of Pa's sermons on the unspeakable rituals. Greta enjoyed these sermons, as she had been closer to the dark demons they follow than any one else in her family.

No one in the family realizes the difference in the pair, as both answer to Arabella's name and Greta acts the same way as Arabella when she has control of the body.

## Current Sketch

Arabella and Greta are keeping more than Greta a secret: the body is pregnant. They do not know who the father is and they are worried because there has only been three visitors to the farm in the past couple of months: the local priest, a man from New York who was lost and a dapper Englishman. Out of those three, only the Englishman stayed the night. Greta is convinced it was him, but Arabella is not as sure, all she knows is that her father has been treating her kinder than usual recently, although that is not saying much.

When she sleeps, Arabella dreams of a beautiful woman. She can not see this woman clearly because she is surrounded by thick, vaporous mists. The woman fills Arabella with a feeling of awe and respect. In her dreams Arabella is handed something, it is a symbol of a sword lying across a shield. Arabella carved this symbol on the bottom of her cauldron and carries a roughly carved copy of it in her pocket at all times.

## Combat

Arabella is a pacifist and therefore does not fight. She never asks for combat based spells and always gives in to anyone who threatens her. Greta, on the other hand, loves to fight. She is proficient in all weapons available to a rogue of her level.

**Fear of Silence (Ex):** Greta is terribly afraid of silence because of her origins. If a silence spell is cast on Greta she must automatically make a Madness save. If she fails, she falls catatonic and forces Arabella to make a successful Will check (DC 25) or pass out for 1D20+4 hours. If Arabella succeeds, then she gets complete control of the body for one day.

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**Personality Shift (Ex):** If a mind-affecting spell, effect or power is used against either personality, the other immediately takes control of the body without need for a Will save (whether such save is allowed or not for that specific effect), thus making the mind-affecting influence ineffective. However, if another mind-affecting spell, power or effect is used against the second personality, she must make the appropriate Will save. If she fails, the body falls into catatonic state for 1d20+4 hours.

## Jefferson Whaetely

**Male human 5th-level commoner/7th-level warrior;** CR11; medium-size humanoid (human); HD 5d4+20 plus 7d8+28; HP 93; Init. +2 (Dex); Spd. 30ft.; AC12, Atk +11/+8 and +11 melee (1d8+6 meat cleaver and 1d4+3 carving knife); SA nil; SQ easily flanked, fear of fire; AL NE; Fort +10, Ref +5, Will +0; Str 22 (+6), Dex 14 (+2), Con 18 (+4), Int 6 (-2), Wis 4 (-3), Cha 7 (-2)

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +9, Handle Animal +5, Intimidate +9, Profession (Farmer) +5; Cleave, Great Cleave, Two-Weapon Fighting, Ambidexterity, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting.

*Languages:* Jefferson cannot speak, but he understands English.

Jefferson is a hulk of a man. He stands at 7 feet 2 inches and is almost as wide. His face is horribly disfigured by a scar that runs from the nape of his neck, over the top of his head and across his right eye. Even though the accident happened a long time ago, the wound still looks fresh and often is surrounded by a corona of dried blood.

Jefferson's left eye never stays still. He is always glancing left or right, up or down. Most people find this disconcerting when they try to communicate with him. This is itself is a problem, for Jefferson cannot speak. An accident during his teens obliterated his language capabilities. The same accident left the scar on his face.

## Background

Jefferson is the middle child of the family, and when he was younger he was Pa's favorite. Destined to follow in his father's footsteps, Jefferson had one weakness that stopped him. Jefferson liked the fair sex too much. He had his eyes and his heart set on the young daughter of the local reverend. One night he managed to entice her to the family's barn.

He clumsily attempted to seduce her in the hay, but she spurned his advances. Angry, Jefferson tried to force himself on the young maiden. When she tried to flee he hit her, breaking her arm with his tremendous strength. The girl panicked and reached out for a weapon. Her fingers closed around the handle of a bailer's hook. She swung this with her uninjured arm and struck Jefferson in the back of the head. She dragged the hook through his skull and brain, causing it to take his right eye in the process. The young girl fled the barn and ran from the small village, fearing the wrath of the other Whaetelys.

It was Arabella who found the would-be rapist. When she fled back to the farmhouse Pa made her and Ma use whatever healing magic they could. They saved Jefferson's life, but his mind had been shattered. Pa asked Ma why her spells had not cured him, so she blamed Arabella. Pa beat the girl bloody and forced her to bed down with the pigs for a week.

## Current Sketch

Jefferson does most of the actual farm work himself, but Pa is always there, offering him 'advice'. When Jefferson displeases Pa he gets a burning hands spell cast at him. Jefferson has a sense of awe for his mother and sees her as his savior, for he believes she restored him back to life and he would still be clever, if it was not for Arabella.

Jefferson often is seen pulling the ox cart (Ma demanded the ox for reasons best left unknown) through the fields of the farm. He sings to keep himself company, but his voice is

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harsh and grating. He cannot articulate words so the 'songs' are often nothing more than moans to a tune.

Recently Jefferson has started mutilating the younger and smaller animals of the farm: the piglets, the kittens of the feral cats in the barn, chickens, calves and most recently he killed a foal. When the animals have been slaughtered he just stands and stares at the mess in front of him. He has been known to stand for hours staring at a carcass. Whether he is doing it out of remorse or whether he is doing it to study the animal is unknown. All that is known is that the creatures are getting bigger as times passes and that a child is missing from the nearby town.

At night, when the Whaetelys are gathered around the front room Jefferson, sits and draws. His pictures are either beautifully intricate or hideously perverse. It is an even chance if he will keep the picture of that night. His pictures usually reflect his thoughts or what he has been doing during the day. Ma has started to hide the pictures of the mutilations when company visits.

## Combat

Like Pa, Jefferson can use any farmyard tool as a weapon. He often fights with the cleaver he uses for butchering the pigs in his right hand (Dmg. 1D8 Critical 20) and with a carving knife in the other (treat as a dagger).

**Easily Flanked (Ex):** Due to his accident, Jefferson can be more easily flanked on the right side. Whenever he faces a flank attack, anyone on his right side receives a +1 circumstance bonus to attack, in addition to any normal bonuses granted by this type of attack.

**Fear of Fire (Ex):** Years of punishment through the use of burning hands spells left Jefferson completely terrified of fire, yet he associates fire with his parents and is prone to strange reactions if they are not the ones inflicting such damage to him. Whenever he is attacked with fire by anyone other than Ma or Pa, Jefferson must

make a Madness save or suffer from a random affliction.

## Lil' Isiah Whaetely

**Male human 2nd-level sorcerer; CR2; small humanoid (human);** HD 2d4+9; HP 14; Init. +0; Spd. 20ft.; AC 11 (+1 size); Atk. none; SA spells, horrific appearance, frightening whispers; SQ random spellcasting; AL CE; Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +5; Str –, Dex –, Con 17, Int 17, Wis 15, Cha 13

*Skills and Feats:* Alchemy +5, Concentration +5, Knowledge (Arcana) +5, Knowledge (That Which Man Was Not Meant To Know) +5, Scry +5, Spellcraft +4; Combat Casting, Toughness.

*Languages:* Aramaic, English, German, Hebrew, Latin

*Sorcerer Spells per Day:* 6/5. Base DC = 11 + spell level.

*Sorcerer Spells Known:* 0 – daze, flare, ghost sound, ray of frost; 1st – magic missile, sleep.

Lil' Isiah Whaetely is the biggest secret the Whaetely Family keep. No one outside of the clan know of his existence and, if anyone discovers him, then any family member will try to kill the person who found him, except Arabella. Greta will kill them, but Arabella's pacifistic nature makes her get them to swear they know nothing of his existence.

Isiah is nothing more than a sack of flesh with a slit for a mouth, two bulbous lumps on top which contain his eyes and a whole in the centre that serves as a nose. He is the color of flesh that has just started to decompose and has red welts all over him.

Technically Isiah is human, but his existence harkens back to Ma and her deals.

## Background

Isiah's story begins before his birth. Ma and Pa were only recently married when Ma



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had the dream. She dreamt of a creature that was bulbous in its size. It was huge, seven feet of flab. It had a large, gaping mouth and two small wings. It spoke to her "Ahh, mortal. You are the perfect specimen for my... experiment. I am... the Great One, and you are my slave. A man will visit you soon, he will introduce himself as Mr. Crowley and you will do exactly what he says."

Ma ignored the dream and for months nothing happened. Then one day there was a knock on the farm house door. Ma answered and standing there was a man. He spoke with an English accent and said "Good day, Mrs. Whaetely. My name is Aleister Crowley and I believe you are expecting me..."

Pa was away on business at the time and knew nothing of Ma's dream. For a week Crowley ordered Ma around and treated her like a general dogsbody. Finally Crowley finished the concoction he was brewing in Ma's cauldron. He handed her a draft and said "Drink." Ma mindlessly obeyed. She fell to the floor screaming. Her body arched and her hands locked in a clawlike position. She stayed on the floor until Pa got home.

Ma tried to explain what happened, but her memory was vague and she could not recall all the details of Crowley's visit. Pa shrugged it off and proceeded with his plan of siring the next generation of black rituals devotees.

Nine months later, Isiah was born. Ma's labor lasted three days. When Isiah was born it is said that the midwife died from shock. Three days after his birth Isiah spoke. He said, "It is watching."

Pa took this as a sign that his plan was right. Thanks to this mysterious proclamation, Pa continued with the siring of the next generation.

## Current Sketch

Lil' Isiah never leaves the basement of the Whaetely farmhouse. He just 'sits' and whispers uncontrollably under his breath. It is from these

whispers that Ma learnt the secrets of how to contact the Darkness to receive her 'gifts'.

It is unknown why the fiend Drigor took an interest in the Whaetely family, but it is believed that he is not Isiah's father. Conceivably, Drigor could have been working for a second party, whomever that might be. All that is known is that Isiah is the cause of the evil that surrounds the Whaetely Farm. The perversion of his body causes the crops to grow badly, animals to be born mutated and the water to become stagnant.

Isiah can not eat dead or cooked flesh. The family has to feed him with live animals they capture. Usually he is fed rats, but Ma has discovered that he is much more forthcoming with his knowledge if he is fed live human flesh.

## Combat

Isiah is useless in physical combat, although his other abilities more than compensate for this lacking.

**Horrific Appearance (Ex):** Anyone not of the Whaetely family seeing Lil'Isiah for the first time must make a Horror save (DC 13). When he is feeding, another Horror save is in order (DC 15).

**Frightening Whispers (Ex):** Lil'Isiah constantly whispers mad ramblings and bits of forbidden lore as a free action. Anyone not of the Whaetely family listening to these whispers for two consecutive rounds must make a Fear save (DC13) or flee in terror.

**Random Spellcasting (Ex):** Lil'Isiah does not choose spells in advance and cannot control which spell he will cast on any given round. He may cast any spell he knows, up to his limit of daily spells of that level. For cantrips, roll 1d4, each number being one of his four 0-level spells in the same order listed above; for 1st-level spells, also roll 1d4, 1-2 being magic missile and 3-4 being sleep. Whatever the result, Lil'Isiah never needs material components for his spells.

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## The Farm

Whaetely Farm is not large. It has enough room for a chicken run, pigsty, a field large enough for 20 cows and oxen, a paddock with 3 horses and a large field used to grow wheat. The products of the farm are sickly at best and sell badly at auctions. Pa also finds it difficult to sell his grain. But Pa is a firm believer in the old expression "That which does not kill us makes us stronger."

The Whaetelys are forced to supplement their food supply somehow. They occasionally let out their spare rooms for the cost of \$1 a night, \$3 if the poor traveler is willing to try breakfast. If the person cannot pay for some reason he may find himself being served up as breakfast for the next lot in. Arabella has no knowledge of the cannibalistic traits of her parents and brothers; she manages to survive on a sparse vegetarian diet.

The Old Whaetely Place, as it is known locally, is located 10 miles from the nearest large town and is only accessible down an old dirt road that gets washed out in heavy rain. If it does get washed out, it is Jefferson's job to make the road traversal again for the first half heading towards the town (Pa thinks that it is the town's duty to repair the other 5 miles).

Wild chanting and screams are often heard coming from the Old Whaetely Place at night. This is when Pa extols the virtues of following the dark rituals and, if the family have been lucky, where they sacrifice any poor person they have happened to kidnap.

## The Farmhouse

The Whaetely home is a large, decrepit farmhouse. It has four rooms downstairs: the parlor, the kitchen, the dining room and the hall with stairs leading up. Upstairs there are enough rooms for Pa and Ma, Jefferson, Arabella and two spare rooms. Each bedroom contains a bed, a chest of drawers, a wash basin and a mirror. There are no carpets in the house and all the walls are bare. Many doors have been taken down downstairs, but every bedroom has a door.

Behind a door under the stairs is another flight of stairs leading to Isiah's lair. Down in the basement, arcane symbols cover the walls, in the belief that they will channel more Things That Man Was Not Meant To Know into Isiah. Ma visits Isiah everyday and, despite the fact he is nearly 40 years old, she treats him like a baby, trying to coax more information from him. Blood soaks the floor from the live creatures the Whaetelys' are forced to feed Isiah. Bones cover the floor; many have been inscribed with runes and sigils by Pa in an effort to make Isiah more forthcoming with his secrets. Isiah is his link to dark powers that be and he tries to exploit it as much as possible.





## The Obituary (Credits) †

† James E. Bowman (JEB)  
E-mail: JEB215AlphaZed@aol.com

James "JEB" Bowman has long been a fan of both the Ravenloft and Planescape campaign settings, among his many other eclectic interests. He's glad for the opportunity to share his combination of the two settings with his fellow gamers. He hopes people enjoy his attempt at crossing Planescape with the Domains of Dread...

He would like to thank the editors of the Undead Sea Scrolls netbook for giving also-rands like him a second chance.

† Eddy Brennan  
(The Lost Hedgewitch)  
(USS editor)  
E-mail: demongod@elhazard.net

Whenever I am asked to provide a bio for a netbook, I am always hard pressed as to what to say. This time I have decided to ramble and hope to make at least some sense.

When I was offered a position among the editors of the USS, I had to have a go. I wasn't certain on what the job entailed, but thought "It couldn't be that difficult". With the wisdom that followed, I sympathize for everyone who is, was or ever will be an editor, professionally or otherwise. However, it is a fun job and you get to read everything before everyone else and gain valuable experience from it. If given the opportunity, I would gladly do it again and will.

This year, we have seen many great articles. Some of them posed some problems,

others fitted in easily. On the whole, there are great ideas floating about in the universe that Ravenloft fans seem to attract a great deal of.

I am proud to be a part of the Ravenloft community and always have been, even in those dark days where we thought there was little hope outside fan-based creations for the future. With many fine writers arising today, I see us at the start of a Golden Age in Ravenloft creation and gaming and may it continue for a long time to come.

Outside the Fraternity of Shadows, I am a professional freelance animator/illustrator. I am as in love as anyone possibly could be and hope to be married soon. I am called a Freak and seek to find the answer behind what really is normal and how can I stay away from being it?

† David Cicalese  
(Jasper o' the Nine Lives)  
E-mail: Jasperot91@yahoo.com

After getting my hands on the Domains of Dread I've been traveling down these dark pathways every chance I got. And what a long strange trip its been! A statue in the courtyard goes out to all the heros who fight for the light.

† Conrad Clark  
(Chaos Nomad)  
E-mail: Dyazion1@aol.com

Ravenloft first captured my imagination a number of years ago, and I have spent many a happy evening in the company of friends, exploring the dread realms. "Hollow", however, is my first attempt at writing something for it,

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and I ask, therefore, that you excuse the roughly hewn piece of granite submitted. There is present a structure, of sorts -a discourse between the social order/ideals and naturalism- but this is not to my satisfaction, especially concerning the difficulties involved with undeath. I shall endeavour to improve...

† Dave Crisman (Infamous)  
E-mail: DaveCrisman@hotmail.com

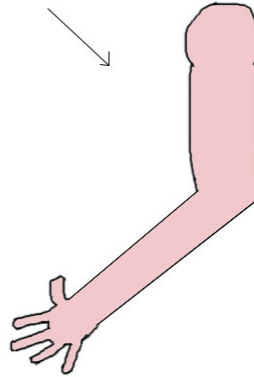
I initially wrote the poem based upon a troubling experience in my life. Later, as I returned from the madness, I found Ravenloft again along with the Kargatane. "The Demon Still Roams" seems to fit perfectly into the dread lands, because it signifies a hopelessness. Not just a hopelessness, but a struggle to overcome. While, even though, on the surface it appears the problem has vanished....."The Demon Still Roams"

† DarkSoldier  
E-mail: dfloyd84@yahoo.com

My love with Ravenloft began when I purchased Domains of Dread from my local hobby shop a couple years ago. Fascinated, I've been a Ravenloft fan ever since. I've been writing ever since I can remember, and I'm hoping to get published soon (within this lifetime). I'm also an active member on the message boards (as - guess - DarkSoldier) if you want to contact me.

*(USS editor's note: After his article was formatted and inserted in the book, Darksoldier sent us waves after waves of changes for his article - even if we changed twice our e-mail address, banned his e-mail from entering in our computer, sent him false "wrong address" return e-mails, and sent him three delivered pizzas (with triple anchovies) for him to pay. Anyway, he once promised it was "the last time he asked for a change and next time it would cost him a limb". Well, guess what ?)*

DarkSoldier's left arm



† Dion Fernandez  
(of Midway Haven)  
**(USS editor)**  
E-mail: souragne@yahoo.com

Dion (me) is a graduate student, paranormal investigator and a recognized Philippine author who has high hopes to become the Father of Philippine Gothic Literature. He is also a crazy Ravenloft/Call of Cthulhu d20 DM who lives in a magical, mystical, gothic pine-laden mountain city 70 or so miles north of Manila, Philippines. Coordinator and preserver of the Midway Haven website, I am, as far as I know, the only Asian who goes on pilgrimage to the Kargatane message boards on a regular basis.

This has been a fun, fun year for me in Ravenloft, and there are a lot of people I'd like to thank, but I narrowed it down to this:

Thanks Midge, Kirby, Phreedra, Tina, Ge-oorg, Russell, Dale, Joël, Eddy, Nathan, Luiz, the Kargatane, the rowdy bar, Forest House Inn, Nokia 3210, NEC Versa and the Golem of Prague. If for some reason you still need to be mentioned, please feel free to write your name on the space provided below.

Thanks to \_\_\_\_\_.

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

† Stanton Fink  
(Atma Weapon)  
E-mail: [apokryltaros@earthlink.net](mailto:apokryltaros@earthlink.net)

Stanton Fink is a biology major currently at CSUDH. Stanton loves to dabble in his garden, and grows flowers and vegetables in it. He obsesses over his drawings, and his collection of books, and loves making histories for his monsters.

† Asbjørn Hammervik  
(Malken)  
E-mail: [assis@c2i.net](mailto:assis@c2i.net)

I've loved Ravenloft since I first stumbled over it some three years ago. This place has everything! The inspiration for this article came to me in a flash, one cold Norwegian winter evening. It was all very Ravenloft, as I was walking through an old cemetery for soldiers. Ain't it cliché!

On myself, well I'm just a young DM from the icy norths. I began playing when I was about 12 years, which makes for 5, almost 6 years of roleplaying! I'm currently doing upper-secondary school, Art and Design in Trondheim, Norway.

† Ed Kowalczewski  
(Edziu)

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Thanks to my gaming group and the creators whose works I merely threaded together and enhanced slightly. "And you are but a thought- a vagrant thought, a useless thought, a homeless thought wandering forlorn among the empty eternities!" - M. Twain.

† Carrie Kube  
(Yaoi Huntress Earth)

E-Mail : [yaoi\\_huntress\\_earth@hotmail.com](mailto:yaoi_huntress_earth@hotmail.com)

A huge fan of the gothic horror genre, Carrie is a college senior majoring in graphic design. Hopefully, if she can get herself into gear, she can start writing more and hopefully get some stuff published

† Andrew McDermott  
(Drinnik Shoehorn)

E-Mail : [drinnikshoehorn@hotmail.com](mailto:drinnikshoehorn@hotmail.com)

My favourite thing about my article is it is the only thing for this netbook I had to type! Seriously, however, recently I've been thinking of the USS as a sort of "sister" netbook to the Malodorous Goat Netbooks. It does me proud to see that my article has been accepted, it's restored faith in my writing abilities! I got the idea for the Whaetely's after watching a bad Cthulhu movie and talking to my friend Matt (who some know as Trebor) about the Whaetely family in Deadlands. I thought "why hasn't Masque got one?". I've never played nor read any Masque book, so it shocked me when I got accepted. Thanks all, hope you enjoy them!

† Hugo Viegas Nascimento

Hugo Viegas Nascimento is 22 yrs old and is currently studying to enter the university to become Book Editor while working at the City Hall. He has played DnD, Vampire, GURPS and Arkhanum since 1995 and RL/MotRD since 1997, but has stopped two years ago due to absolute lack of time. He has successfully submitted a few articles to the BoS series but now, also due to complete lack of time, has kindly shared all rights on his previous works with his old pal and DM, Luiz Eduardo Peret (Arijani), so that they could be converted to 3E.

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

† Nathan Okerlund  
(Dmitri Stanislaus)  
([USS editor](#))  
E-mail: erikvanrijn13@hotmail.com

Before this year's USS I never really appreciated the work editors have to do; no wonder they refer to themselves in the plural. I'd like to thank the Kargatane for giving us their support for our ongoing netbook, my fellow Fraternity members for their hard work and constructive criticism, and all the contributors and readers of this notebook--because you guys are really the point of the whole operation. I hope the articles here find their way into many, many campaigns.

† Joël Paquin  
(Gotten Grabmal)  
([USS editor](#))  
E-mail: joekin@hotmail.com

For the second year, it's been a privilege to work on the Undead Sea Scrolls, a project I started in 2001, with the great help of Nathan Okerlund (whatever he said :). Of course, when we started it, we didn't have the slightest idea it would have that role in 2002.

2002 was fun: First, the team of USS editors are all cool cats and we have fun working together. Second, I'm amazed of the quality of some of the article we received - just one thing to say, and it is "wow". It really was interesting doing the 2002 netbook.

Also, importantly, I'd like to thank the Kargatane crew, current and emeritus, for their work over all these years, all that time spent for the fans, and in 2002 for their support of the USS. Many of you are now Kargat in charge of the resurrection of Ravenloft in 3rd edition, and that is fully deserved. I raise my glass to your health.

On a more personal note: the patience of my wife is almost legendary, my son is growing up a paladin (but with some rogue skills), and

we have to punish my daughter because she raises demon from the 650<sup>th</sup> level of abyss when she is supposed to be sleeping. All is well I guess...

† Andrew Pavlides  
(alhoon)  
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I'm in my senior year in the Technical University of Crete. I was born in 1980 and I play D&D since 1989 when my father bought me the Basic Rules of D&D. I play & DM Ravenloft about two and a half years.

† Luiz Eduardo Neves  
Peret  
(Lord Arijani)  
([USS editor](#))  
E-Mail : rakshasa2001@hotmail.com

He was born in Dec 18th, 1967. He's a journalist, teacher of ESL for elementary students, editor and short history writer. His official, "money-making" job is currently in the State University of Rio de Janeiro (UERJ), as administrative assistant and secretary for the University's High Chambers. He has just started M.A. in Theory of Communication, getting ready to become a Professor in that area.

He has first played RPG in the early 90s and has DMed Ravenloft since the end of his first year as a player. So far he has had articles, both on RL- and MotRD-related matters, published in the Book of Shadows and Book of Sacrifices, as well as a few alternative RL-related websites. Besides his primary life goal ("take over the world, Pinky"), he intends to one day produce his own gothic horror cartoon series and comic book.

† Sean Pointdexter  
(God Brain)  
E-mail: prozac\_god@hotmail.com

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

My real name is Sean Poindexter. I am a sociologist at Missouri Southern State College in Joplin, Missouri. I live in a ridiculously undersized apartment with my 22 lb. Norwegian Forest Cat: Odin, and am frequently visited by my girlfriend Amanda. On the Kargatane message board, I am known as The God Brain.

✝ Sampo Rassi

E-mail: vertigo667@hotmail.com

Sampo Rassi, a dabbler in things mortal men are not meant to discover and an author who has a soft spot for happy endings and drama. Yago Trevesc is the first one of my hopefully many projects for the Ravenloft setting.

✝ Tami Sammons

E-mail: tami\_sammons@email.com

I am currently a homemaker and mother of a 6 year old boy. I spent 10 years in the U.S. Air Force. My husband is currently in the U.S. Air Force. We live in Maryland, USA. My favorite AD&D settings are Ravenloft and Planescape. And Carnival and the Shadow Rift are my favorite Ravenloft accessories

✝ Andrew Snow

E-mail: SnowSyracuse@aol.com

Andrew dwells in a sardine can in frigid Syracuse NY. There he occupies himself with the creation of beasts too horrible for words. The sole victims of these beasts are those foolish enough to share a gaming table with him.(Insert manical laughter here)

✝ John Kristian Spanberg  
(The Stoic)

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In real life, The Stoic is known as the 21-year old John Kristian Spångberg, who is currently studying law at the University of Bergen in Norway. He's close to his 10th year of role – playing, but is currently on a hiatus from active gaming, as he has yet to start a campaign away from home. He's been playing Ravenloft for about 8 of these years. When not studying or using a computer, he's watching TV, reading, playing in the student band or listening to music, with Mike Oldfield being one of his favorite artists.

Well, if I can add some credits, I'd like to thank:

(Insert: Academy Awards music)

- Malken/Ezekiel, for giving me some inspiration for The Northlands.
- StefanMAC, who let me refer to his Utburd article.
- My brother Harald, for helping me with stats when I didn't bring my Core Rulebooks.
- The USS editors, for their patience. (Of course!)
- A pat on the back for all of the Malodorous Goat Tavern moderators, regulars and guests because of their rules lawyering and role-playing hints.

✝ Stephen C. Sutton (ScS)

E-mail: stephencsutton@hotmail.com

I reside in Sudbury, Ontario, Canada. I dedicate this article to the countless hours spent in a highschool library going over books of the arcane.

✝ Midge Wesley (of Midway Haven)

E-mail: midwayhaven@yahoo.co.uk

Midway Haven is my first foray into Ravenloft, and I absolutely loved the experience. Too many people in my head right now to thank.... thank you world, you give me a reason to go on :)

# The Undead Sea Scrolls

Clark Gable to Vivien Leigh: "Frankly  
my dear, I don't think we're in Kansas anymore."



And thanks again to all those who submitted articles,  
NPC for the contest, or were involved in this netbook !

We'll be back in 2003 ...



*(pic from Night of the Living Dead - 1968 version. Kids, know your  
classics !)*

... and again... and again ...

